

Panhandle-Plains LAND BANK, FLCA

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A Message Straight From the Farmer

Every year, Farm Credit takes a group of young farmers and ranchers, including Panhandle-Plains Land Bank customers, to Washington, D.C. The trip shows these up-and-coming rural leaders how our financing cooperative is funded and how policy is made. It also gives lawmakers the opportunity to hear about agriculture straight from some of the food producers they represent.

From our perspective, this is extremely important. Currently, there are only 29 farmers and ranchers in the new Congress that was seated in January — 25 in the House of Representatives and four in the Senate. An additional two House members own almond orchards and two are vintners. Moreover, just 15 percent of the entire U.S. population lives in a rural area, according to the USDA Economic Research Service.

Given those statistics, it's no wonder that producers and rural residents often feel their needs are overlooked or misunderstood in the political arena and the media. As every farmer and rancher knows, government policies and regulations have an enormous impact on the agricultural sector. From tax and trade policies to the farm bill, the laws that are passed and the programs that are implemented at the federal and state levels influence farmers' and ranchers' ability to earn a living and feed the nation. Policymakers also affect Farm Credit's ability to provide dependable and competitive credit to agriculture and rural America.

That is why Panhandle-Plains Land Bank supports the efforts of farmers, ranchers and commodity organizations that lobby on behalf of agriculture. We are proud of our customers who play important leadership roles in their rural communities and the farm sector, and we encourage individual producers to do their part to educate elected officials about their business.

If we all speak up for agriculture, the message is more likely to be heard.

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What a Year!

Members Hear Good News at 2015 Regional Stockholder Meetings

This year's regional stockholder meetings, held March 31 and April 2, were marked by positive comments and reports of record-setting financial results, presented by Panhandle-Plains Board Chairman Randy Darnell and Chief Executive Officer Gregg Lloyd.

\$12.7 Million Record Income

First off, Darnell announced record income of \$12.7 million in 2014, and detailed the series of events that contributed to these strong results.

"Our largest income year ever was the result of profits on our retail side, and closing the books on an ethanol plant loan we had dealt with for some time," said Darnell. He explained that retail loans generated record earnings, a direct result of our borrowers' performance on their loans. In addition, the sale of the ethanol plant added some \$1.7 million to the association's bottom line in 2014, and allowed the recapture of a significant amount of capital that had been placed into loss reserves some years ago.

\$7 Million Cash Patronage

There was also more good news. Based on these excellent 2014 results, Darnell said, the board and management were able to declare a record \$7 million cash patronage this year.

"This returns 39 percent of the interest our borrowers paid on their loans in 2014," Darnell said.

Finally, looking ahead to the Farm Credit System's 100th anniversary next year, Darnell called on members to tell their neighbors, "Come to the Land Bank and let's grow together."

7 Percent Loan Growth

Lloyd's review of 2014 financial results was just as positive. In addition to record-setting income, the association set a new loan volume record of \$464 million, which represents 7 percent net growth from 2013. Lloyd described the 2015 cash patronage as evidence of the association's culture.

"When the association does well, our customers do well, and the cash patronage becomes a part of the board and management's culture for operating the association," said Lloyd. "It has been the

board and management's choice since 2004 to pay our customers patronage 100 percent in cash each year."

Patronage Lowers Borrowing Cost

Lloyd described how the cash patronage has a significant impact on the cost of borrowing. Considering the average patronage is now over 20 percent, a customer with a 5 percent interest rate on their loan effectively pays less than 4 percent.

In closing, Lloyd assured members that Panhandle-Plains Land Bank is meeting the challenges of regulation, technology and competition, and stands ready to meet our customers' financing needs.

Hopper Retires, Miller Elected

At each of the meetings, the board recognized retiring director Ronnie Hopper of Petersburg, who had decided not to run for another term. The board commended Hopper for his 23 years of leadership and dedication to the association.

In the board elections at the meeting, Perry Kirkland was re-elected to Place IV and Rusty Henson to Place IX, while Lyle Miller of Floydada was elected to fill Hopper's seat on Place VIII.



From left to right, Land Bank directors Lyle Miller, Rusty Henson and Perry Kirkland

The Future of Agriculture Is in Good Hands

Land Bank Member Attends Farm Credit Young Leaders Program

At Panhandle-Plains, we are proud of all of our members, and are especially pleased when our young producers shine. One of these is young farmer Ryan Wieck of Umbarger, Texas, who, because of his dedication to agriculture and to taking on leadership roles in his community, was selected to attend the 2014 Farm Credit Young Leaders Program.

Wieck was among 29 young ag producers chosen from a multistate region to participate in the program, which gave them an opportunity to get an inside look at how the Farm Credit System carries out its mission to provide reliable credit to agriculture and rural America.

The program began in New York City, where the participants learned how investors buy Farm Credit notes and bonds, providing the funding that Farm Credit lending cooperatives put to work in rural communities. Nationwide, Farm Credit provides more than \$200 billion in financing to farmers, ranchers, rural homeowners, agribusinesses and other eligible borrowers.

Next, the group traveled to Washington, D.C., and discussed policy issues with U.S. Department of Agriculture officials, Senate and House agriculture committee staff, and agriculture industry leaders.

The five-day program ended with an awards ceremony at George Washington's Mount Vernon plantation, where the first president embraced innovation at his farming and milling operations.



Panhandle-Plains Land Bank member Ryan Wieck, left, celebrates the completion of the 2014 Farm Credit Young Leaders Program with Jimmy Dodson, chairman of the Farm Credit Bank of Texas Board of Directors, at Mount Vernon, Virginia.

the future of agriculture, and we want them to know the role Farm Credit plays in their industry and communities.”

A fourth-generation farmer, Ryan Wieck farmed on leased land for several years before buying land in 2013 with the help of Panhandle-Plains Land Bank, where his parents and grandparents were also customers. He grows cotton, grain sorghum, wheat, hay grazer and corn, including some crops on irrigated land, and also farms in partnership with his father. In addition, he is a volunteer district fire chief and EMT for the Randall County Fire Department, and serves on the Randall County Farm

Bureau board and the Randall County Crops and Beef Cattle Committee.

The Tenth District Farm Credit Council is the regional member of the national Farm Credit Council, the trade association representing the legislative and regulatory interests of the nationwide Farm Credit System.

“As part of our mission to serve rural America, Farm Credit has a strong commitment to helping young people in agriculture be successful,” said Stan Ray, president of the Tenth District Farm Credit Council, which hosted the ninth annual Young Leaders Program. “These impressive participants were selected by their lending cooperatives because they represent



New York City is the backdrop for this image of the 2014 Farm Credit young leaders.

New Folks, Changes for Your Association

Panhandle-Plains has been busy making changes to meet the demands of our industry, and the needs of our customers.

In the Amarillo office, **Kay Lynn McLaughlin** is transitioning from the retail side to central; along with other duties, she will be the association's consumer credit specialist.

Taking Kay Lynn's place as loan officer is **Shandi Leavitt**, who joined the association in January. Shandi graduated from West Texas A&M University in 2014 with a degree in agriculture media and communications. She has a family farming background, and calls Wildorado, Texas, home. Her most recent employer was Attebury Grain.

Another new face in the Amarillo office is **Tiffany Ingram**. Tiffany, who attended Amarillo College, joined the association in February as a loan administrator associate. Previously, she was employed by United Allergy Services. She has two children, Nikki and Jonathan.

Whitney Holmes joined the Perryton office this January as a loan administrator associate. Whitney comes to the association from Ochiltree General Hospital, where she was human resources manager. A Perryton native, she attended Oklahoma Panhandle State University. Whitney and her husband, Stephen, have one daughter, Tatum.



The Amarillo office staff: from left to right, Cassidy Beckham, loan administrator associate; Cindy Giebel, loan administrator; Marcy Bohannon, loan administrator associate; Steve Donnell, senior vice president and officer in charge; Trent Tyson, loan officer; and new employees Tiffany Ingram, loan administrator associate, and Shandi Leavitt, loan officer.

We're Moving!

Moving office locations is at best a challenge, but this move is for all the right reasons. The Amarillo retail and central team has outgrown its current facility on 45th Street and will be moving a few blocks north to 5625 Fulton Drive. The move is planned for this summer; additional information will be forthcoming.



Collecting Memories and Memorabilia

Does your family have a long history with Panhandle-Plains Land Bank? Do you have Farm Credit memorabilia from decades ago?

Next year, Panhandle-Plains Land Bank will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Farm Credit System. In preparation for the centennial, we invite our customers to share their Farm Credit memories and memorabilia with us.

Perhaps you have your grandparents' original loan documents. Maybe you have old Farm Credit photos, brochures, meeting programs or news clippings about the association, or very old objects bearing the association's logo. If so, let us know. We might want to photograph your artifacts or make copies of your documents for our archives.

We'd also like to hear how your family has been involved with Panhandle-Plains Land Bank through the decades and generations.

Contact your local branch office to help with our history project.

Farewell to Longtime Employee



From left to right, Perryton office folks: new employee Whitney Holmes, loan administrator; Joyce Smith, retiring loan administrator; Jess Wall, vice president; and retired vice president Sandy Judice.

After 20 years of service to the association, **Joyce Smith** retired on April 30. The board and her fellow team members sure do miss her, and we join her Perryton customers in giving her our best wishes for the next chapter in life. Joyce and her husband,

Larry Don, have travel plans, and then want to focus full-time on their grandchildren and their activities. With 11 of them, we expect that will fill the void nicely. Our sincere thanks to Joyce for all she has done for the association and her customers.