



120 West Main St., PO Box 156, New Prague, MN 56071 • 952-758-5811 • Fax: 952-758-5813
www.agrelationscouncil.org • arc@gardnerandgardnercommunications.com

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For More Information: Barb Ulschmid, 952/758-5811
arc@gardnerandgardnercommunications.com

ARC ELECTS 2010 BOARD, DEBUTS NEW LOGO, ANNOUNCES NEW WEB SITE, AND RE-INSTITUTES GOLDEN ARC AWARDS

FEBRUARY 22, 2010 – NEW PRAGUE, MN – The Agricultural Relations Council (ARC) elected its 2010 board of directors at its annual conference in Memphis Feb. 18-19. The board also re-introduced the Golden ARC awards, debuted its new logo and announced creation of a new Web site to be launched in mid-March.

The theme of the 2010 annual meeting was: “Consumer Outreach for Ag.” The annual meeting attendees received professional development through seminars on social media, consumer messaging through innovative programs of the Tennessee Farm Bureau, a presentation by Agricenter International, and site visits to Ducks Unlimited and a behind-the-scenes look at barge and elevator loading operations at ADM facilities.

As an optional activity following the formal meeting, seven members participated in Project EverGreen’s GreenCare for Troops yard makeover at a military family’s home in Memphis. GreenCare for Troops provides free landscape service for military families where the major breadwinner is serving overseas. Members assisted Tracey Nealy, whose husband is serving in Iraq and will be home in May, by replacing a privacy fence, installing new landscaping and doing a general yard clean-up.

The 2010 ARC Board includes: Deron Johnson, Rhea+Kaiser Marketing Communications, board president; Mace Thornton, American Farm Bureau Federation, first vice president; Katana Ewbank, Alpha Scouts, second vice president; and Bob Giblin, Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health, immediate past president. Directors include Mark Ingbritson, Rhea+Kaiser Marketing Communications; Amy Keith McDonald, McDonald Marketing Communications; Carroll E. Merry, Countryside Marketing; Janice Person, Monsanto; and Mike Opperman, Charleston/Orwig.

The ARC is experiencing a re-birth after maintaining a low-profile over the past few years. The 2010 ARC board was put in place in 2009 and was re-elected by acclamation by those in attendance at the

annual meeting. “We made great strides in the past year,” Johnson said. “We’ve put several new initiatives in place as we move forward as a relevant ag public relations/public affairs member organization. We are moving forward on several fronts to enhance professional development within our organization.”

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Among the new developments and announcements made at the annual meeting include:

- Creation of a new logo (developed on a pro bono basis by Rhea+Kaiser Communications)
- Development of a new Web site (to be completed in mid-March by Rhea+Kaiser)
- Announcement of the 2010 Golden ARC awards – which are divided into two divisions – Campaigns and Tactics. The deadline for 2010 is May 1 and the award winners will be announced at the Ag Media Summit in St. Paul July 27.
- A membership campaign that offers an ARC membership (\$175) for just \$100 between now and the end of the NAMA meeting April 23.
- Continuation of the Silent Auction (sponsored by ARC and AMS) at the Ag Media Summit this summer in St. Paul.
- Selecting Fort Myers, FL, as the site of the 2011 meeting in late February.

ARC leadership thanks the following companies and organizations for supporting its efforts in 2009-2010: Bayer CropScience, Gardner & Gardner Communications, Rhea+Kaiser Marketing Communications, American Farm Bureau Federation, Archer Malmo, National Cotton Council of America, Rabobank, CCI Marketing and Countryside Marketing, Inc.

“This is the right time to get involved again in ARC,” Johnson adds. “We are committed to growing the organization and developing programs to meet member needs in the many facets of public relations and public affairs. There are many issues facing our constituencies from within our industry and to consumers who need to be effectively informed about the many benefits agriculture brings to the table. We look forward to great growth in the years ahead.”

For more information about getting involved in ARC, including memberships, sponsorships, committee work, etc., contact Den Gardner, executive director, or Barb Ulschmid, associate director, at 952/758-5811 (arc@gardnerandgardnercommunications.com); or Johnson at 630/955-6656 (djohnson@rkconnect.com).