

# FORAGE FIRST

"Published by the Peace River Forage Association of British Columbia"

Thirty Fifth Edition

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## Why are these Ladies Smiling?



They have just finished writing up the great information in this issue of Forage First and are so happy putting it on our website.

[www.peaceforage.bc.ca](http://www.peaceforage.bc.ca)

### 2003 Directors of the Peace River Forage Association of British Columbia

*"Dedicated to putting forage first in the hearts, minds and pocketbooks of livestock producers and other forage enthusiasts"*

Chuck Sutherland	Ernest Nimitz	Bill Wilson	Michael Cowger	Sarah Davies	Pat Gerlinsky	John Kendrew
President	Vice President	Treasurer	Secretary	Director	Director	Director
780-2221	843-2300	782-2866	787-1790	788-1970	759-4038	786-5652

Committee Chairmen: R & D-Glenn Hogberg 843-7653; Communications and Information - Ernest Nimitz;

Wildlife Policy-Burnem Grant 786-5566; BC Forage Council-John Kendrew

Forage Coordinator -Sandra Burton 789-6885; Forage Field Woman - Julie Robinson 759-4411; Web Mistress - Kim Strasky 789-6885





## EDITORIAL

During this past summer we had quite a lot of contact with the **Grassland Conservation Council of B.C.** headquartered out of Kamloops. We were able to influence them into expanding their board of directors into the Peace. Our Association representative on the GCC Board is **Allen Eagle, PFRA, Dawson Creek**, Congratulations and good luck Allen..... We are also working together closely with the Northern Lights College on several adult education courses. **Bob Haugen at (250) 782-5251** is our contact.....One of our major **partnerships is now with the Soil Conservation Council of Canada** ( see enclosed insert) and the Abbotsford Soil Conservation Group with **Sandy Traichel**.....Whither goest Environmental farm planning in British Columbia, a hot topic a year ago? **It appears to have been buried by "The Mad Cow"**, the Vancouver 2010 Olympics Bid, devastating summer forest fires in Southern B.C.? E. H. Bine, our Roving Reporter, and his new wife Disca are looking for an answer, please .....ARECA is the

new acronym for the new umbrella group. **The Agricultural and Research Extension Council of Alberta** which amalgamated the local Forage Associations and local applied Research Associations across Wild Rose Country effective April 2003. Hence, the Alberta Forage Council is no more. If you are interested in more information on ARECA or the North Peace Forage Association phone **Leanne in Fairview at (780)835-8052**.....**The Mad Cow**: has focused our cattle and the related forage industry collectively as ranchers and farmers like nothing else in our lifetimes. Marketing of cattle and other ruminant livestock will likely never be the same. New ideas are required to remain viable and become successful. We have some! **If you are interested in helping and participating in a marketing club** please contact one of the following: John Kendrew (250)786-5652; Bill Wilson (250)782-2866; Ernest Nimitz (250)-843-2300 for further information..... **Photo thank yous** for this issue of Forage First: Joan Tubb, Kim Strasky, Julie Robinson, Sandra Burton, Rae Haddow, Glenn Hogberg & Arnold Mattson.....We take this opportunity to welcome **Rob Davidson** to our Advisory Board. Rob is with Keddies of Grand Prairie and is a long time rancher, roper, Gallagher electric fence - Morand Corral - Cap Solar water system enthusiast. We look forward to continuing to work closely with Rob and Keddies in the coming years.....Another group that we work closely with is the Western Forage Beef Group in Lacombe. Please check into their website [www.agric.gov.ab.ca/crops/forage/wfbg](http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/crops/forage/wfbg) to keep updated on their numerous extension and research activities.....And now, the main question. **Do you want to be a director of the Peace River Forage Association?** If you have this type of leadership desire, and, I can assure you that your Association can use your efforts, please contact either Sandra or Julie at 250-789-6885 and let them know your intentions.....Our roving reporter E.H. Bine and his new wife Disca recently read an article in a National news magazine on the oil business and the cattle business on public lands in Wyoming. They were so impressed with this article that they now have this question for you: **Coalbed Methane, how bad do we need it?**..... In the last 12 months we have started focussing our information delivery more on our website and less on print media such as Forage First. **Look for the trend to continue** as we move along in this century of information technology. Please therefore consult the Peace River Forage Association website regularly to keep up to date at [www.peaceforage.bc.ca](http://www.peaceforage.bc.ca).....Another on going and exciting partnership we have is the **Branding the Peace initiative**. This is a long term and currently relatively slow moving process to identify with a brand all the fine agricultural products of the Alberta and British Peace (plus agri - tourism services) and to thereby improve the net profit situation of all these folks as a result. Please contact Doris or Frances at the Kiwanis Enterprise Centre (250)782-5745 for further information. A good part of the rationale for those of us who live in the California size (**sans Schwartznerger**) northern agricultural area is that our Northern Climate helps us produce healthy food products and great tourism services and we want to get paid for it, and, get this: we are going to make it happen! .....And yes, we are still involved with the **B.C. Forage Council**.

## Forage Association Partners with BCMAFF to Help Producers

The PRFA of BC recently revamped the Feed Listings pages on the website to accommodate a request from the BCMAFF to make the listings province wide.

In mid August a call came from the Ministry asking if we would update our Feed Listings to include all of BC to help producers find and sell feed. Producers in all parts of the province have been hit hard by the BSE disaster and are scrambling to find enough feed to keep livestock over the winter that normally would have been sold. To add to the problem some areas suffered a drought this summer, drastically affecting the amount of hay they were able to produce.

Our site already had a local service for producers to buy and sell their feed so the BCMAFF figured it would be faster to

revamp our pages then to start from scratch. They offered to fund the changes and a twice weekly updating of the listings so Producers would have the latest information. In just under two weeks the new pages were up and running with sections for all regions of BC, as well as one for Alberta and other provinces.

The Ministry is working with us to help get the word out to Producers about this free service. If producers do not have access to the internet they can still advertise what they need or have for sale by contacting the BCMAFF offices to get a paper form to fill out which will then be faxed to us. Check out the listings at [www.peaceforage.bc.ca](http://www.peaceforage.bc.ca). By Kim Strasky



## Recognition "10 Years Involvement"

While our Forage Association has a number of members who have been vigorously participating in and supporting our activities for five years or more, and some brand new enthusiastic members, we also have a select group of ranchers, foragers and farmers who have been with us pretty well since we started up the Peace River Forage Association in July 1992. These folks helped initiate our Forage Association Programs in the early 1990's and bring our group of foragers and grass farmers to the position we occupy in 2003 as regular disseminators of lots of useful economic and environmental information to our members and supporters.

### The list of dedicated foragers:

*Don & Donna Alexander, Dawson Creek*  
*Bill & Jean Anderson, Groundbirch*  
*Arnold & Nelda Bennett, Two Rivers*  
*Bill & Fayette Bouffieux, Fort St. John*  
*Fred & Barb Burres, Farmington*  
*Keith & Marilyn Carroll, Dawson Creek*  
*Jim, Bonnie & Aron Collins, Montney*  
*Paul & Barb Cowger, Montney*  
*Horst & Laurel David, Tomslake*  
*Ken & Hanna Emes, Goodlow*  
*Alex & Margaret Fraser, Progress*  
*Walter & Pamela Fritsche, Dawson Creek*  
*Frank Habersack, Tomslake*  
*Arthur & Laurel Hadland, Baldonnel*  
*Ben & Wilma Hansen, Taylor*

*Glenn & Ann Hogberg, Progress*  
*John & Pat Kendrew, Pouce Coupe*  
*Bruce Kutschker, Pouce Coupe*  
*Henry and Patsy Nagel, Pouce Coupe*  
*Ernest & Joanne Nimitz, Sunrise Valley*  
*Viggo & Doreen Pedersen, Fort St. John*  
*Darrell & Nancy Peterson, Farmington*  
*Ernie & Sybel Pilz, Tomslake*  
*Dan and Wendy Rose, Groundbirch*  
*Barrie & Barbara Sones, Cecil Lake*  
*Doug Summer, Hudson Hope*  
*Bob & Joan Tubb, Tomslake*  
*Eckbert & Christa Weitzel, Charlie Lake*  
*Harvey & Phylis Wiles, Baldonnel*

If you are enjoying the present broad range of services provided by your Forage Association, then you owe theses  
B.C. Peace River Country Forage Pioneers a big vote of thanks!

## Pasture School - Lacombe, Alberta

Reita Sigalet and I attended the Pasture School in June in Lacombe, AB. The school was hosted by the **Western Forage-Beef Group** and was very enjoyable. We were there for 3 days and spent about half of it in the classroom and half of it doing field tours. There was a lot of information passed on during the classroom sessions and I am glad that we came home with reference manuals as it was more than a person could retain in that amount of time. Myself, I got the most enjoyment out of the field work as I like hands on learning. The first field work we did was plant species identification. After doing this exercise I learned that I had more desirable species in some of my pastures than I had thought! The field tours took us to two locations; **Jan Slomp** who has a dairy and pastures his dairy cows and **Brian Luce** who runs a cow calf and yearling operation. The Lacombe area has been quite dry the past couple of years and it was really neat to see these two operations and learn their strategies in dealing with the second year of drought and the choices they had made with their pastures. This was of particular interest to me as Lone Prairie (home) was a drought region last year and by June of this year we knew we were heading into a second very dry year. Jan Slomp's grass was about knee high and starting to head already because of the dryness. He was just about ready to harvest it as it was quickly becoming too ripe

for his dairy cows to benefit from it. If he cut it while it was still growing in about 3 weeks he would have a very desirable high protein pasture again. Jan said that his feeding costs with grazing during the summer were a fraction of his winter feeding costs when his cows are on a full ration. At the Luce place we saw several pastures that were a variety of species and ages. Some of their most productive pastures were the ones that were put in 25 years ago! Their cows were calving then (mid June) and we talked a lot about the nutritional needs of his cows calving at that time of the year and during breeding season. One of Brian's primary goals in these dry years is to preserve his pasture stands. He had several pastures that he was only going to graze once this year and we walked through two pastures that were mid thigh high and had not seen cows yet. I got a few little tips from Brian that helped us with the drought conditions this year and with making the change from February calving to May calving. The whole experience of going to this school was awesome. The information I came home with is so valuable especially in a year like the one this has turned out to be. Thank you to the Forage Association for making attending this school possible. *By Sarah Davies*





Touring the historic Hubley Homestead on Summer Forage Tour



Forage Princesses having a soil sampling duel at John Kendrew's direct seeding plot.



Guess who is sporting the coat and cap of perennial ryegrass guaranteed to reduce greenhouse gases?



Support for beef producers expressed in this summer by local businesses & co



Keith Carroll, Bear Mountain Sh



Richard leads The Tour at Martens Feed Lot



Pasture pipeline plow laying pipe at Rainey Ranch.



Barrie & Barb Sones enjoy the BBQ at Merz Ranch.





The best innovations come from ranchers and farmers!  
Peter Van Genne's idea to set up grazing enclosures.



Darwin Linford at home on the Range.



Mary Lou Swift, the new coordinator for BCFC, gets  
some historic perspective from Bob Tubb, a past  
President of BCFC



Marven & Marion Stefan felt the Summer Forage  
tour was very worthwhile.



Another Beautiful Farmington Sunset.



Dave & Dianna came all the way from Australia for  
the Summer Forage Tour.



## Vanderhoof – Nechako Express

Over 30 Peace River producers departed by bus from Dawson Creek, June 20, to participate in a tour of the Prince George and Vanderhoof area hosted by the Peace River Forage Association of B.C. Joined by another 20 plus ranchers from the Vanderhoof area, the tour was an adventure for all. We learned new ideas to make farming more economical and new information about feedlots, dairies and the beef market, both locally and internationally.

Our first scheduled stop was at the Bar K Ranch, north east of Prince George, where we were warmly greeted by the Kenver BBQ crew and ranch managers Marc and Laura Grafton. The Graftons gave us a tour of their ranching operation and described how they manage their breeding stock by dividing them into manageable breeding groups, moving them separately through their large range encompassing 3000 acres. One of the Grafton's priorities -- and challenges -- in managing their range is to keep cattle out of the many lakes and marshes there. They are in the process of fencing off some of these lakes and providing offsite-watering systems.

We departed from Prince George Saturday morning and headed out to Darrell Ophus's, west of Prince George. Here, Ducks Unlimited representative Murray Clark and the current landowners around the meadow explained the concept of a wet meadow to us. It was interesting to see how controlling the water level in the S.O.B Lake can increase the haying acres for ranchers there, as well as provide viable habitat for waterfowl and other birds. Denise McLean, of the Prince George Ministry of Agriculture office, and Ken Awmack, based out of Williams Lake, joined us here and provided valuable commentary about the local ranches and real estate in the area.

At Halltray's Dairy farm in Vanderhoof, we were shown the ins and outs of a new dairy operation. We were all impressed with the machine that monitors how much calves get to eat in a day. It reads their electronic ID collar and then determines whether it needs milk at that moment. We also saw how farm manager Stewart Hall divided up the cattle to keep track of milk production.

At Martens Feedlot, we saw 3,000 head of beef cattle, many of which were ready to go to market. This stop provided many of us

with a clear picture of exactly how the BSE crisis was affecting the cattle industry and consequently our own operations. On a brighter note, we observed their silaging method; one that many of us had never seen before and one the Martens say is more economical than pits or silos. They bag all their grain and feed into long white tubes, and feed it as they would silage. This process is aided by a bag stuffer worth about \$20,000 (20-foot diameter). These machines could sure put up the tonnage and I wouldn't be surprised if the idea starts to show up more in the Peace area.

Saturday concluded with a stop at Dave and Lois Merz' ranch. The Merz' have operated a backgrounding operation for many years. Dave explained how the BSE issue was having less impact on his operation, a result of his long-term relationship with a Canadian corporation to market his beef. That relationship has allowed him to realize better prices than ranches that had previously been dealing with U.S. corporations. Wayne Ray spoke about the impact of the Pine Beetle in the Nechako area while Charlie Belsham talked about his bull test station at Fraser Lake, explaining how it operated and the benefits it provided to producers. Dave Merz ended the evening with a presentation on his recent agricultural trip to Argentina and Brazil, sharing many amazing stories and sights from there. He was impressed with the marketing system in Argentina and how the operations were managed, emphasizing that many of the fields harvested two crops a year. He also described how political conflict had crippled the economy in both countries. The cattle, however, were in top shape, and the land fertile.

Many thanks to our hosts and volunteers for making this tour possible, as well as to our sponsors: Peace River Agriculture Development Fund, the Soil Conservation Council of Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Peace River Forage Association, Ducks Unlimited, Bale Jockey, Kenver Equipment, the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, and Prairie Seeds. *By Julie Robinson*

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## Managed Grazing Sites

Wow, has the summer ever flown by, where did it go? Well this summer I spent a lot of my time monitoring managed grazing sites. Thanks to Peter Van Genne we have come up with an easy method of collecting some yields from the pastures we are monitoring. Peter came up with electric fence grazing enclosures, allowing us to clip some yields an enclosed area inside the pasture where the livestock are. I take clippings every time the livestock move out of a monitored paddock and I take one final clipping at the end of the to simulate a one time harvest such as haying.

We have three co-operators that we were focused on this summer as well as keeping an eye on our past managed grazing sites. The Carroll's have 3 grazing enclosure on their place, where we are monitoring the growth of the grass, attempting to document that managed grazing allows the Carroll's to get more grazing days off their land then continuous grazing does. Keith says that now that they manage their grazing their able to extend the grazing and the stocking density in the pasture.

The Hogbergs, host another set of 3 enclosures, this set up is to compliment studies we have been doing on their place for at least 3 years. We collecting clippings from here as well to back up the stocking rates that Jason and Glenn have been keeping track of. We are both testing our monitoring methods as well as keeping

some records of plant species and densities at Hogbergs to gain a better understanding of how managed grazing improves the pasture. Currently the Hogbergs pasture has an excellent mixture of grasses and legumes and is very productive supporting 30 plus heifers on 40 acres from May to October. Their pasture has changed species and densities in the past 4 years and one thing I can say for sure is the number of rosebushes has declined and the number of desirable plant species has increased.

The Burress host the final set of 3 enclosures this summer. They have a more delicate pasture system, as much of it is native species, which require different management then tame species. They have struggled with their pastures due to dry conditions in the past 2 years. His rotational grazing has set the aspen regrowth back, and visible tree damage has been done.

I have also been visiting other ranches that practice rotational grazing, attempting to glean their tricks of the trade, from their fencing particulars to their watering site setups. I have also been to a ranch were they have used chemicals to set back the brush and then plan to keep ahead of the regrowth with grazing. This summer has taken me to many different ranches and one thing remains constant, there are so many interesting things to learn from each producer. *By Julie Robinson*



## Coming Events

**Monday December 1, 2003**

Annual General Meeting Peace River Forage Association Guest Speaker and luncheon before afternoon AGM **Christoph Weder, AAFRD "Managing a Cow/calf Operation Competitively by Integrating Producer, Extension and Travel Experiences"**

Contact: Julie Robinson (250) 759-4411

\* \* \*

**December 2 and 3, 2003\*\***

**Capturing Feed Grain and Forage Opportunities Seminar**

Getting the folks together "Growing it, Feeding it and Selling it"

Capri Centre in Red Deer, Alberta; Sponsored by: AAFRD, WFBG, AESA, AAAF, ARECA

Contact 1-800-387-6030 or 1-403-742-7942

\* \* \*

**December 3, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>, 2003\*\***

**Sixth Annual Western Canadian Grazing Conference**

The Raddison in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Contact: Sheila at Saskatchewan Stockgrowers (306)757-8523

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**Tuesday, January 27, 2004**

Winter Forage Seminar PRFA of B.C.: "Surviving Crisis on the Ranch: Economic and Management Ideas. Featured Speakers: **Richard Marten**, Marten's Feedlot, Vanderhoof, and **Herb Locke**, Market Analyst and Ranching Economist, Edmonton. Local panel of Peace Country Ranching Entrepreneurs including: **Sarah Davies** of Rainey Ranch, Lone Prairie and **Ernest Nimitz**, Kiskatinaw River Ranch in Sunrise Valley. Contact: Julie Robinson (250)-759-4411.

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**Saturday, February 21, 2004**

**PRFA of B.C. Biannual Forage Fundraising Auction and Mid Winter Fun Day.** Donations and volunteers welcome. Contact: Sarah Davies (250)788-1790; Sandra Burton (250)789-6885; Julie Robinson (250)759-4411. Location to be determined at AGM.

*\*\* (For Cost Sharing and travel arrangements from B.C. Peace please contact Bill Wilson (250) 782-2866)*

## Services Offered by Peace River Forage Association of BC

**Nose Pumps:** Contact: Glenn Hogberg (250) 843-7653 There are 3 nose pumps (Eider, Lister and Aquamat) available from PRFA of BC

**AerWay:** Contact Chuck Sutherland (250) 780- 2221 The 12' AerWay aerator with chain harrows and cement weights is available for rent. The current rates are \$2.50/ac for members and \$3.00/ac new members. Renters are responsible for transport from last location unless otherwise negotiated with Chuck (for example crossing the Peace River).

**Wire spooler:** Contact Pat Gerlinsky (250) 759-4038 This 12 volt wire spooler is great for rolling up or unrolling high tensile wire. Also terrific for rolling up old barb wire that you may wish to recycle. Rental rate \$25/day.

**Pipe Line Plough:** Contact Brett Henschel (250) 782- 3116 This enables placement of water pipe up to a 1 foot deep up to ½ mile from water source. It is currently available for demonstrations rent free. Contact Brett or Julie Robinson at (250) 759 4411 for more information on setting up a demo.

**Water Pumping Service:** Contact Brett Henschel or Brian Haddow (250) 782-3116 BC Peace Region Pump and Pipe Program continues to make this valuable service available for farmers and ranchers to pump water and recharge their dugouts. Three Berkley irrigation pumps and 3 miles of 6" irrigation pipe are made available to the public. This supply of equipment, pumps and the 30" lengths of 6" irrigation pipe have the ability to handle most dugout filling projects and many other pumping jobs. The Berkley pumps are driven by a 540 PTO drive. The pump has the ability to discharge 1000 gpm with an elevation lift of 10 feet. Longer pumping distances and /or increases in elevation will reduce the amount of discharge.

These rental rates apply to the 1<sup>st</sup> day of rental:

\$250/ 1 <sup>st</sup> day	one pump & one mile of pipe
\$250/ 1 <sup>st</sup> day	pump only
\$250/ 1 <sup>st</sup> day	one mile of pipe only
\$100/ 1 <sup>st</sup> day	additional pump at time of delivery
\$250/ 1 <sup>st</sup> day	additional mile of pipe at time of delivery

Additional days rental costs:

\$250/ day	one pump & one mile pipe
\$100/ day	pump only
\$250/ day	per mile of pipe

*Note: a \$50 surcharge will be added to the total owing if the bill is not paid when the equipment is picked up.*

**20' Flexicoil 8000 Air Drill:** Contact John Kendrew (250) 786-5652 This drill has double shoot Barton openers and is being used to direct seed forage crops and/or place fertilizer into forage stands. It will be available for rent by members, once demonstration plot commitments are met. Rental rates are \$25/ac for new members and \$22/ac for members. Rates are subject to change dependent on tractor lease and operator costs. Travel costs are also paid by each renter.

**40' Dutch Anhydrous Applicator:** Contact Art Funk (250) 759-4769 This unit enables placement of anhydrous ammonium into stubble or grass stands with less nitrogen losses to the air. Rental rates \$2 per acre.

**All these rates are in effect until December 31, 2003 only.**



# **Annual General Meeting and Luncheon**

**Taylor Rec Hall, Taylor, British Columbia**

**11:30 a.m. Monday, December 1, 2003**

## **Peace River Forage Association of B.C. Agenda**

1. 11:30am – 12:30 pm Luncheon and Guest Speakers: Christoph Weder, “Managing a Cow Calf Operation Competitively by Integrating Producer, Extension and Travel Experiences”
2. 1:00 pm Call to order of AGM and approval of Agenda.
3. Minutes from December 2002 AGM (Michael Cowger)
4. Association Business, Directors and Committee Activities in 2003 and Future plans for 2004 Projects.
  - A. Correspondence
  - B. Presidents Report (Chuck Sutherland)
  - C. Auditors Report and Discussion of Auditing Procedures
    1. 2004 auditors appointed
  - D. Treasurer’s Financial Reports (Bill Wilson)
    1. General Association Account 1036-796
    2. Water Project Account 1042-758
    3. SCCC/GHGMP Account
  - E. Communications Committee Report (Ernest Nimitz)
  - F. Nominations for Directors (Directors whose terms are expiring: Michael Cowger, John Kendrew, Bill Wilson, Pat Gerlinsky)
  - G. Wildlife Policy Development Committee Report (Burnem Grant)
  - H. Research and Development Committee Report (Glenn Hogberg, Kim Strasky, Julie Robinson, Sandra Burton)
    1. Identify current and future status of R&D projects
    2. Review of items for rent from association
  - I. B.C. Forage Council Report (John Kendrew)
  - J. Advisory Committee Report (Ernest Nimitz)
5. 3:15 pm Coffee and Refreshments Break
6. 4:00 pm Association Business and Programs for 2004
  - A. Election of Four Directors
  - B. Winter Forage Seminar Tuesday January 27, 2004 at Tower Lake Community Hall.
  - C. Theme: “Surviving Crisis on the Ranch: Economic and Management Ideas”.
  - D. Forage Fundraising Auction, Feb 21, 2004
    1. Location
    2. Items Needed
  - E. Summer Forage Tour Program 2004 Discussion of where and what to see; Tentative date June 12th, 19th, 26th.
  - F. Forage First & Communications Committee Project
  - G. Winter Forage Club Meetings, Forage Friendly Field Days & Upcoming Events
  - H. Working with Advisory Committee.
  - I. Any other pertinent business matter or forage subjects which the membership wish to bring to the floor for discussion.
7. 5:30 p.m. Adjournment

Members, please note, this is your opportunity “to get a free lunch” and to hear our guest speakers. Director’s Business Meeting and Supper to follow the AGM 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. Members Welcome  
Preceding the AGM, Directors meet for business at 10:00 am