

President's Letter
Allen G. Squire
May/June, 2010

What a great turnout we had from dairymen, allied industries, suppliers and legislators at the WQCC hearings in Santa Fe last month where new dairy rules were being debated with the NM Environment Department. In our world where we deal with out-of-control governmentalism on a daily basis, it is great to see organizations like DIGCE and DPNM where the people involved work so passionately for the producers, members and non members alike. It was also gratifying to see our feed dealers, equipment suppliers, tire companies and even our veterinarians speaking up about the benefits of our dairy industry on the economy of this state. Everyone knows how far those milk checks go in the local economy. The fight is not over yet. The hearings will restart in June and continue for a while yet. If you have a neighbor who is not a DPNM member or a supplier who depends on you for business, be sure to bring them with you to Santa Fe. On your way back, get them to join DPNM.

Our challenge is not unlike the fight over “global warming,” now known as climate change, since it’s not warming anymore. If thinking people insist on real science not “political science,” then eventually the truth should win out. A note to the “well meaning” ladies who testified on the first day of the WQCC hearings about turning our dairy farms into wind farms, you are free to build your own wind farm on your own property but our farms are ours; they are not yours to take away!

Sharon, Ryan and I attended the Western States meeting in Salt Lake City (my first Western States meeting). After everyone went around the room and talked about the dairy economy in their state, I was hoping we could go around again and have everyone try to say something nice or positive the next time. That didn’t happen. We did review various dairy pricing and supply management plans.

I am constantly amazed at the resiliency of dairy farmers. We just keep breeding better cows and getting more efficient every year by necessity. It’s a great place to raise a family and teach your children how to work. Unfortunately, occasionally, we have to pay for the privilege of working. I am convinced that everyone from our coop leaders to the processors and IDFA to our government leaders all think that we can continue to produce cheap milk with no concern for making a profit. Our overriding goal for all of agriculture should be sustainability, which for us means we need to make a profit! A comment I heard at the Western States meeting was “farming without profit is called gardening.”

I want to wish a great big “Thank You” to Sharon Lombardi, our executive director who is “slowing down” to part-time in June after 17 years as executive director of DPNM. What vision the founding fathers of DPNM had in hiring Sharon 17 years ago. If only everyone who represented us at the local, state, federal and even our coop level would work as tirelessly for us as Sharon has. Sharon, thank you for a job well done and thank you for staying on part time.

Also thanks to Beverly Fikse for all the great work in Santa Fe and around the state. Bev is moving up to Executive Director in June. Thanks also to Kaye Dunnahoo who will become Deputy Executive Director, and to Susan Curry who is a terrific assistant to all.