

# Actiongram

Feb. 2014



Advancing livestock media professionals

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## Why put it off?

**W**e chose careers in agricultural communications. Deadlines are part of the deal.

Most of my friends and colleagues in this industry thrive on checking off a task, and hitting “send” on a story or project just before the deadline strikes.

I build my days and weeks around those deadlines. But truth be told, I build them a bit too close for comfort, at times.

Speaking of deadlines and pushing them to the limit (oh, you know it's true), 2014 LPC Contest entries are due April 17. What an excellent opportunity to show off the work of your staff, while competing for top honors in 54 categories. It's never too early to prepare and submit those entries!

So, what can we do to build a little more breathing room into our schedules, and alleviate a bit of that stress we all experience? I've asked three organized women in the industry for their greatest tips on avoiding procrastination and working efficiently.

I'm going to put these ideas into practice, without a doubt. Tomorrow.



### **Katrina Huffstutler Owner, Cactus Flower Communications**

“I used to be a horrible procrastinator. Honestly, I think it's part of being a writer, really. I'd always meet the deadline, but I'd rarely get anything done more than a day early, you know? Even if I had plenty of time to do so. Now that I'm working full-time with a baby under roof (with no childcare), I have to be a lot

more diligent about getting things done as soon as possible and not just getting them done ‘on time.’ It takes more work to be prepared for the unexpected, whether that's a social media crisis or a teething baby who needs Mom a little more that day.

At any given time, I'm managing six to 10 very active brands on social media, in addition to working on several copywriting or copyediting projects per week. Though it's a small part of my business, I also do roughly six feature stories per year, so about every other month I've got one of those in the works.

I do most of my work early in the morning before my daughter wakes up, during naptimes, or during times



Christy Lee  
Cee Lee Communications  
2013-14 LPC President

when she's happy to play independently. This allows me to have most of the afternoon ‘off’ (still monitoring social media sites and checking e-mail, but not working on projects) to spend time with her, catch up on household chores and run errands.

Every day, I update a list on my legal pad of what projects need to be done and by when. Since not all of my projects come with deadlines, I assign them myself.

My new way of working means getting as much as I can done every morning, despite when a project is due. I treat the end of each workday as a deadline in itself, which works for the natural procrastinator in me.” (continued on next page)



**Shelia Stannard**  
**Director of Industry Programs, Illinois Beef Association**  
 “I try to stay organized with one calendar and one

task list, organized by project. I color-code my calendar, and it is the resource I take with me everywhere!

I also make a weekly ‘to-do’ list by projects, and I currently have about six projects. I feel a sense of accomplishment when I can cross a task from my list. The last thing I do before I leave work for the weekend is make the next week’s list.

If there is something urgent that I’ve forgotten, I make sure to get that done before I leave the office.

The other organization tool I use is a three-ring binder for each project or event. The binders are my go-to filing system and everything stays in one place. It serves as a handy reference for the following year, too.”

**Shelly Sitton**  
**Professor, Oklahoma State University Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership**  
 “procrastinate [prəˈkrastəˌnāt; prō-] verb [ intrans. ] delay or postpone action; put off doing something

Hmmm. I wish I could say I don’t procrastinate. Sometimes life dictates we “put off doing something.” But is that always a bad thing? I don’t think so. It depends on your priorities.



While my job is consuming and rewarding, my job is not my life. My family is. I book family events — speech therapy, school programs, sheep shows, meetings — into my schedule first to try to avoid conflicts as I plan for work. When something “pops up,” I rearrange the best I can to be where I need to be. I will give up sleep if it means I can be with my boys when they need or want me.

Generally speaking, we find a way to get everything done that has to be done. After family, I prioritize based on deadlines — What do I need first? I used to do all of the little quick projects first so I could mark them off my list (yes, I’m one of THOSE people). Now, I work on things first that are due or needed first. That means I ‘delay or postpone action’ on other things, but you cannot do everything at once.

(Admittedly, I try to multitask when I can write or grade and do laundry at the same time.) When you concentrate on the task at hand, you can do it well and move on to the next task.

Organization truly is the key; if I write it on “the list,” it gets done.

If I need to be somewhere, it’s on my phone calendar. If I don’t, I just might embarrass myself and forget whatever ‘it’ is. When I do ‘procrastinate’ — good reason or not — I appreciate the break and get back to the task as soon as I can. I don’t make it worse by having negativity toward the task. Now, off to the little voice calling ‘Mama.’”•



**July 26-30, 2014, Indianapolis**

**Indianapolis Downtown Marriott Hotel**

The block is now open at the hotel and registration will open May 1. The program is almost ready and will be published soon. Plan on attending the tours on Saturday and a new videography workshop scheduled for Sunday. It’s going to be another great event! Check it all out at

[www.agmediasummit.com](http://www.agmediasummit.com) and watch for continuous updates.

Much more information will be in the next Actiongram.

## LPC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**FEBRUARY 15**

Deadline for Forrest Bassford Student Award applications

**MARCH 1**

Membership dues/renewals due

**APRIL 17**

Deadline for entries for LPC Publications Contest

**MAY 15**

Regional workshop for

LPC and American Agricultural Editors’ Assn. (AAEA)

Des Moines, Iowa

**JULY 26-30**

16th Annual Ag Media Summit, Indianapolis

## LPC CONTEST DEADLINE

**April 17, 2014**

Go to

[www.livestockpublications.com](http://www.livestockpublications.com) and click on **ONLINE/PRINTABLE FORMS** for rules and forms.

Awards will be announced on July 29, 2014 in Indianapolis during the Ag Media Summit.

Questions? Contact [dianej@flash.net](mailto:dianej@flash.net)

Forrest Bassford Student award apps due **Feb. 15**

Contact: **Scarlett Hagins**, committee chairman, [scarlett@kla.org](mailto:scarlett@kla.org) or find the application at: [www.livestockpublications.com](http://www.livestockpublications.com)



Bob McCann, incoming NCBA president



Wayne Cole, Boehringer Ingelheim



## LIVESTOCK PUBLICATIONS COUNCIL ANNUAL LUNCHEON



Reggie Underwood, SFP



The largest crowd ever for the luncheon!

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) met in Nashville, Tennessee, for their Cattle Industry Convention and LPC held its annual luncheon in conjunction with the event. More than 90 LPC members and guests were in attendance to enjoy lunch and a welcome from incoming NCBA President **Bob McCann**, Victoria, Texas.

The tradition of the LPC Luncheon would not be complete without the self-introductions from everyone and certainly no one was in a hurry to leave as the networking and socializing continued well after the meal was over. Also a highlight of the event is the announcement of the years' Headliner and Hall of Fame award winners. Below are

brief biographies on the 2014 winners.

Thanks to everyone for attending and especially to **Boehringer Ingelheim** and **SFP** for their support co-sponsorship of this event. Plan on next year's event in San Antonio, Texas, on February 5, 2015.



The 2014 recipient of the Headliner Award is **J. David Nichols**, managing partner of Nichols Farms, LTD, Bridgewater, Iowa. Nichols and his family developed their Iowa operation into one of America's premier beef genetics suppliers. From the original 240-acre farm, Nichols Farms has grown into the nation's fifth largest seedstock producer, with full-service genetics provided through operations in five states. Dave has been a pioneer

in the seedstock arena and Nichols Farms was the first seedstock provider to hold a genetic source verified comingled feeder auction in the nation. He is well respected in the global beef community and his reputation for honesty, integrity and customer service is unsurpassed. Another factor in Nichols Farm success is that Dave believes research and development are essential and has participated in several research projects with various universities. He has received numerous awards and LPC is proud to honor him as its Headliner Award winner.

*Both of these gentlemen will be honored this summer at the Ag Media Summit and plaques honoring them will be hung in the LPC Hall of Honor located at the American Royal headquarters in Kansas City, MO.*

This year's Hall of Fame winner is very special to the LPC family. **Wayne Bollum** was extensively involved in the livestock publications industry for most of his career and served on the LPC board from 1994 to 2000 and served as president in 1993-1994.

He attended the University of Minnesota and received a bachelor's degree of Animal Science in 1978 and later received his Masters Degree from the Carlson School of Business. In the mid 1980's he moved to the Chicago area and began working in the publishing business for the Farm Progress Company. After his marriage to Jean in 1988, Wayne began working with Beef and National Hog Farmer. Wayne started his Limousin cattle operation, Golden Oaks Beef, and continued to work as an advertising representative for Farm Journal Publications. His wife, Jean, passed away on September 18, 2010 and Wayne retired from the publications business to stay home with his children and began his Golden Oaks Consulting business.

We lost Wayne on May 15, 2013 but next summer we will honor him with the LPC Hall of Fame award and present to his children Haley, Will and Wendy.

