



Livestock  
Publications  
Council

Advancing livestock media professionals

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# Actiongram

Newsletter of the Livestock Publications Council,  
an international organization serving the  
dynamic livestock communications industry.

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## Happy New Year LPC Friends!



Angie Denton  
2015-16 LPC President

As we begin 2016, I wanted to share with you a quote I recently found and wrote in my planner.

*Life is like a camera:  
Focus on what's important,  
Capture the good times,  
Develop from the negatives,  
And if things don't work out,  
Take another shot.*

What a great analogy for those of us in ag communications. Most of us utilize a camera for our professional and/or personal lives and we understand how some days we get that great "shot" and some days the lighting, subject or background is not the way we want it and we just need to try again.

My goal for 2016 is to live life with that analogy in mind.

#### Focus on what's important

This is something we all need to remember. Don't get me wrong, I'll be the first to admit I work a lot of late hours and have a hard time leaving work at the "office," but as my boys grow older I am beginning to really realize how valuable every minute is. As much as I love my job, what matters most is my faith and family. And I need to remember to walk away from work and enjoy time with my boys.

#### Capture the good times

Take time to smell the roses. There's no doubt we all need to take time to enjoy life. My husband, John, has been wanting to take the boys to Colorado to ski. It is something he enjoyed with his family growing up. Since Wesley was little, he has taken the boys a couple times a year to Westin, Mo., to "ski" but it's not quite the same as Colorado.

We always had an excuse or reason why we should not or could not make the trip to Colorado.

With two full weeks of Christmas break and the reality the boys are getting older, we decided our list of excuses for not going is getting shorter. So we loaded up and spent three days in Colorado. Although I spent those three days in the lodge working, the smiles on the boys' faces as they hit the slopes each morning, including John's, were priceless. I'm so thankful we took the time and made the investment.

#### Develop from the negatives

Roll with the punches. I think it is so important to realize and accept when you make a mistake, but even more important is to learn and improve so it does not happen again. We should never stop learning and growing.

#### Take another shot

Never give up. One of my hardest lessons was when I did not get elected to the National Junior Polled Hereford Council. I was devastated when my name was not announced as the Area 3 director in 1991. It would have been so easy to choose to not run again.

But, I swallowed my pride and chose to learn and grow from the experience, and ran again in 1993 when area 3 was up again for election. I'm so glad I took that second shot.

#### Plan to attend NCBA luncheon

Hope to see everyone in San Diego Thursday, Jan. 28 for the LPC Luncheon. The event will start at 11:30 a.m. in the Gaslamp B-D at the Manchester Grand Hyatt Hotel.

*continued on next page*

A big thank you to Elanco for their continued support of LPC and sponsorship of the luncheon.

Your LPC board is excited to announce the 2016 Hall of Fame and Headliner recipients, share an update on current LPC programs and have a chance to hear from incoming NCBA President **Tracy Brunner**.

Don't forget to RSVP by Jan. 22 to **Diane Johnson** at [dianej@flash.net](mailto:dianej@flash.net) or 817-336-1130.

I challenge each of you in 2016 to live your life like a camera. The end result will be picture perfect.

*Angie*

# JOIN US!

## LPC ANNUAL LUNCHEON

**Thursday, January 28, 2016**

**11:30 am - 1 pm**

**Location: Gaslamp B-D at the Manchester Grand Hyatt Hotel**

*during the National Cattlemen's Beef Association Convention in San Diego, California*

**Incoming NCBA President Tracy Brunner has been invited to address the group plus we'll update you on all of the exciting LPC events planned for 2016.**

You MUST RSVP by Friday, January 22 to Diane [dianej@flash.net](mailto:dianej@flash.net) or call 817/336-1130  
**No shows are highly discouraged.**

*Thanks to Elanco for their sponsorship of this event and for their continued support of LPC and this luncheon.*

**Elanco**

SAVE  
THE DATE

# LPC

## Regional Workshop

### Manhattan, Kansas

### TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2016

8:30 am – 4 pm

Make plans now to be in Manhattan, June 14 for this LPC sponsored workshop prior to the Beef Improvement Federation meetings that start Tuesday evening.

The workshop will be held at the International Grains Programs conference center at Kansas State University. The committee has planned an educational and exciting day you won't want to miss. Highlights will include a session on how to "tell the story" using different communication tools and a session on how to write about a "scientific" topics.

Watch for registration materials in future issues of the *Actiongram* and on the LPC website.

#### Tentative Agenda

- 8:30 am Registration
- 9 am Marketing Your News: Using Different Venues to Tell the Story  
**Holly Spangler**, *Prairie Farmer* editor
- 10:15 am Tips and Tricks Round Tables
  - Capturing and editing video on shoestring budget (and no training)  
**Gerry Snyder**, multimedia specialist, KSU
  - Social Media & Blog Writing  
**Sheila Ellis-Glasper**, digital media specialist, KSU
  - Building Graphics for Social Media  
**Katie Allen**, Communications Specialist K-State Research and Extension
  - Understanding Analytics  
**Shannon Krueger**, freelance creative professional with Allegro Creative
- 11:30 am • Update on National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) Update with **Marty Vanier**, NBAF
- Noon Lunch
- 1 pm Tour IGP facilities - Feed Mill & Pet Food Facilities
- 2:15 pm Genomics in the Beef Industry  
Dan Moser, Angus Genetics Inc. president
- 2:45 pm • Scientific Writing: Writing So Producers Can Understand  
**Sarah Hancock**  
KSU documentation technical writer  
**Greg Henderson**  
Farm Journal/Beef Today editorial director  
**Miranda Reiman**  
Certified Angus Beef asst. director industry information
- 3:45 pm Closing and KSU Call Hall ice cream send-off

# LPC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## JANUARY 28

Annual Luncheon at NCBA Convention  
(see info page 2)

## FEBRUARY 16

Deadline for Forrest Bassford Student Award applications

## MARCH 1

Membership dues/renewals due

## APRIL 20

Deadline for entries for LPC Publications Contest

## JUNE 14

LPC Regional Workshop  
Manhattan, Kansas

## JULY 23-27

18th Annual Ag Media Summit, St. Louis

## LPC business notes

- Dues notices should be in your mailbox by now and we certainly appreciate it if these are paid right away. Credit cards are accepted for an additional service fee.
- Don't forget to mark your calendar for **January 28** for the annual luncheon at National Cattlemen's Beef Association convention. See the notice on page 2 in this newsletter.
- February 16 - deadline for the Forrest Bassford Student Award applications. Students -- it's FREE money! See below for more information.
- Are you interested in serving on the board of directors for LPC or on a committee? Let us know!
- The program committee for Ag Media Summit is ramping up right now and looking for interested members. Contact the LPC office to find out how to get involved.

## Forrest Bassford Student award applications due Feb. 16

**(note deadline date due to holiday)**

We are happy to announce that Alltech will again be the major sponsor of the **Forrest Bassford** Student Award. Scholarship applications for the award are available on LPC's website. This scholarship will be awarded in St. Louis, Missouri, at the 2016 Ag Media Summit (AMS). Also, up to four travel scholarships of \$750 each will be awarded to deserving students who must be able to attend the AMS. If you have questions, contact: **Julie White**, committee chairman, [jwhite@hereford.org](mailto:jwhite@hereford.org). Deadline for applications is February 16, 2016.

*About Alltech: Alltech is a global leader in the animal health and nutrition industry and among the top 10 animal health companies in the world, focused on natural scientific solutions to today's biggest agriculture and food industry challenges. Headquartered in Nicholasville, Kentucky and with Bioscience Centres in the US, Ireland and Thailand, Alltech has offices and distributors in 128 countries and 51 Tier 1 and Tier 2 manufacturing facilities located strategically throughout the world. •*

## Stipends awarded to LPC members

The Livestock Publications Council board of directors believes that expanding knowledge and excitement in one's profession will keep dedication and commitment to that job. Now in its third year the board approved three \$1,000 stipends to help members expand their professional development.

Just announced are these three award winners: **Jennifer Carrico**, High Plains Journal; **Lisa Bryant**, Cowboy Connection Designs & Communications and **Sarah Hill**, DairyBusiness Communications. Jennifer plans to attend a Scott Stebner photography seminar and Lisa and Sarah plan to attend the 2016 Ag Media Summit. Watch for reports from our stipend award winners in the Actiongram later this year.



### New LPC Program

## LPC's Coffee & Collaboration



Join us for a 45-minute online chat to discuss issues that you face day-to-day in your job. We'll share ideas, discuss challenges, and help each other grow in our profession...and have a little fun, too! Mark your calendars for February 17 from 10 – 10:45 am. More details will follow soon!



# 10 STRATEGIES FOR INSPIRED SOCIAL MEDIA

*LPC Stipend Report by Jena McRell,  
Angus Media digital editor, St. Joseph, Mo.*

Developing and maintaining a strong social media presence for your brand or organization can seem like walking a tight rope between spending enough time online — and spending a *ridiculous* amount of time online. Can you relate?

It's a medium that is constantly changing, constantly engaging new audiences and constantly finding new ways to surprise us. So as communications professionals, how can we find the creativity to charge ahead with new plans and consistent results in the social media realm?

That's the motivation I hoped to find at a conference earlier this year. Thanks to the LPC professional development stipend program, I attended the Ragan Communications (well-known for their popular website and e-newsletter *PR Daily*) Social Media for PR Conference in Walt Disney World, Florida.

Straight from the most magical place on Earth, here are 10 ways to re-inspire your social media efforts.

## **1. Everything is driven by story**

That's the ultimate mission behind the Walt Disney Company. Whether at the parks or in the movie theater, perfectly thought-out story details come together for the best possible guest experience. During the conference, we heard from Thomas Smith, who heads up the Disney Parks blog, about how they bring new life to storybook tales both in the parks and online. He encouraged us to discover our brand stories and find creative ways to share them online.

## **2. The 80/20 rule**

On the Disney Parks blog, they rely on an 80/20 rule for content creation. 80 percent whimsical stories that are fun and engaging, followed by 20 percent company news and messaging. What are the stories and topics your readers will find engaging? How can they connect with current trending topics? Develop content with the goal of entertaining the audience first, and they will likely to take note of pressing announcements later.

## **3. The right content**

From NASCAR, we learned that practical tips for content go a long way. Saying hello or thank you are easy ways to engage with your fan base. Keep track of

the questions you receive most frequently and present the content your audience craves. Other tips include: keep copy short and sweet (140 characters or less on all platforms), use compelling imagery, ask questions of your followers, and always link back to your website or other relevant content.

#### 4. Digital content must be transferable

Long gone are the days when you could post a story on the website, cross your fingers and hope the audience would find it. Today's digital media environment requires that we deliver content throughout a variety of mediums — from websites to Facebook, e-newsletters to smartphone notifications, tweets to Instagram posts. Every news release, feature article, photo series or video from your website should be integrated into social media.

#### 5. Consistency is key

*National Geographic Travel's* Andrea Leitch shared with the group that consistency is central to establishing an engaging social media presence. She said if you post 12 times today, you better post 12 times tomorrow. Follow user patterns and note what times of day work best for your audience. They'll notice the steady rhythm of your posts, and look forward to what's coming up the next day.

#### 6. Solicit user-generated content

The best digital stories often reside in the hands of your audience. Ask them to share photos, comment with a story or send in their favorite memories associated with a certain topic. Start conversations that allow users to interact with one another, and your brand/organization, through social media accounts. It is a social community, after all.

#### 7. Build the right measurement plan

What is your ultimate goal behind your digital media strategy? Increased web traffic? Determine the best way to track progress. Growth in your fan base? Make a note of where you are now, and where you want to be. Ashley Brown, vice president for Spredfast, advised us to focus on completion rates and total video views, rather than just the clicks being reported.

#### 8. Re-think your strategy

With so many social media options, it's easy to think that every business needs a presence on each platform. The reality is that it's more important to target the group you want to reach, track analytics associated



*To LPC and the professional development committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to attend this conference. The stipend program is a fantastic benefit to our organization.*

with the account and be willing to re-structure your social strategy accordingly. Time, especially online, is precious. Make sure you are investing it wisely. "Focus on being smart, being interesting and being present in the medium." – Ashley Brown, Spredfast.

#### 9. Connect offline

The most powerful connection is still a real-world, offline experience. The Disney Blog hosts a series of "VIP events" each year that brings groups of fans together for fun (in-person) events. They get to know each other and your brand, and will be more likely to stay in tune with what's happening in the future. Give social media fans the chance to set aside the mobile devices and interact with your team in the most genuine way possible. They aren't likely to forget the experience.

#### 10. Be curious, get started

This quote from Disney's Thomas Smith summed up the conference well: "Being curious is the key to being creative. See things differently, and get started." The worst thing you can do for your social media accounts is nothing. Try new approaches, focus on your goals and remember that this medium is driven by conversations. Tell an engaging story, and ask your fans to share theirs, as well.

But most importantly — get started.