



WHATCOM FARMERS CO-OP NEWSLETTER

Volume 28, Issue 1

LYNDEN, WASHINGTON 98264

MARCH 2010

WHATCOM FARMERS CO-OP

Proudly presents the

“Tina and Lena Show”



We are fortunate to have been able to arrange for these two special gals from Minnesota to entertain us again at our Annual Meeting of stockholders and guests on Friday night, March 26th at the Northwest Washington Fairgrounds in Lynden.

Annette (Lena) Hustad and Sue (Tina) Edwards entertain hundreds of groups annually with their Scandinavian singing and comedy act. The Tina and Lena Show will be something you won't want to miss! Many of you were with us at our 15th, our 20th, and our 25th Annual Meeting and you will surely agree that their popularity was outstanding.

Our meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. at the Expo Building and will include a dinner for the whole family! Please come early because we are expecting a very large crowd of customers and guests.

Please RSVP Dinner Reservations - 354-2108

SPRING IS HERE!

Early spring weather has brought a lot of activity to our *Country Store* in Lynden. Have you seen what 'Charlie' has brought in for plants and shrubs yet? Please come in and take a look around! Our Garden Center has become very popular. We have a broad selection of *early* blooming trees & shrubs and a lot of color with our cool weather annuals.

We have Lawn & Garden supplies, lawn seed and most any planting needs that you may have. Most new customers to our stores are pleasantly surprised to see what we carry in our stores!



ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS MEETING INVITATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 26

6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.

NORTHWEST WASHINGTON
FAIRGROUNDS (Expo Building)

Lynden, Washington



Rich Stipe

Rich has been the General Manager of Whatcom Farmers Co-op since it began in February 1982. He formerly was fertilizer and pesticide fieldsman for Western Farmers Association, in Lynden. He has over 40 years of management and sales experience in agriculture. Rich is also very involved in community service activities in Whatcom County.

ECONOMIC CONCERNS LINGER

The year of 2009 continued to be a year of uncertainty. Volatility in the cost of most products was definitely a concern. We have made very attempt to remain competitive in the marketplace. The cost of fuel products dropped substantially in 2009 and we attempted to have low inventory so we could ride the price down and give you the benefit of lower prices. Fertilizer and chemical prices stayed relatively strong through the spring season, but have now reached a lower level.

Our sales in dollars for 2009 dropped about \$10,000,000, however, we continued to sell additional product volume which gave us more total gross margin dollars to cover our expenses. Our expenses have continued to drop, especially our interest expense, so our 2009 savings for you increased by nearly \$500,000 over the previous year.

Your Board of Directors voted to set your 2009 patronage at a whopping \$2,500,000, up by \$900,000 over 2008! Because of the stressed economy, they also voted to raise the cash portion of your dividend from 35% to 40%. This means that \$1,000,000 of cash patronage will be paid back into our community this month following our Annual Meeting on March 26th!

THANK YOU for doing business with Whatcom Farmers Co-op during 2009! I would like to invite each of you to come and join us for our 28th Annual Stockholders Meeting in the Expo building at the NW Washington Fairgrounds in Lynden at 6:00 p.m. on **Friday evening, March 26th**. We have arranged special entertainment for you to watch *Tina and Lena* perform their Scandinavian singing and comedy show. Please **R.S.V.P.** for your free dinner reservations by Wednesday, March 24th to 354-2108.

Propane Territory...



You will see new identification logos on our fleet of Propane delivery trucks that will better promote the image of "WFC ENERGY" to our growing number of propane customers throughout Whatcom County. Our staff has the reputation of being a dedicated group of individuals who can handle your needs. They are committed to our community and respected professionals throughout our trade area. Many customers choose us as their propane supplier because we were recommended by a neighbor. Others decide that it is a good time to switch to "WFC Propane" for great service, a competitive price, and a good year-end dividend besides!

WFC COUNTRY STORES 'Rock' for Pets & Animal Supplies



Our Country Stores are considered exceptional in the broad selection of pet food & pet supplies. Whether you have a cat or a dog, a calf or a horse or a pig, chickens or rabbits....you name it, we probably have what you need to take care of them. Come-on-in and see what we have and visit with our experienced staff of employees!

VOTING STOCK?

Common Stock (voting stock) can only be subscribed for, issued and owned by bona fide producers of farm products. Common stock has the value of \$250.00 and only one share can be issued per person or entity. Common stockholders shall be entitled to only one vote. Common stock can be purchased outright or obtained by stock subscription. Producers can subscribe by paying a minimum of \$50.00 and signing an agreement for the remainder due. Common stock can be obtained by transferring dividends earned from patronage refund stock issued as preferred stock. Stop in Whatcom Farmers Co-op if you qualify for Common Stock.

PATRONAGE DIVIDENDS

Patronage dividend checks for 2009 purchases should be available at the Annual Meeting, Friday night. Your Co-op showed total net savings of \$3,403,640 in 2009. Patronage will be paid on \$2,500,000 of savings, with remaining profit from non-patronage sources, taxed and put into unallocated reserves.

The patronage dividend will amount to approximately 3% of your purchases depending upon the type of products you purchased from the Co-op. This would translate into about \$10.00 per ton on fertilizer bought from our Agronomy Center and about six cents per gallon return on your fuel purchases.

The patronage refund issued to **you** this year will be 40% in cash (\$1,000,000) and 60% in preferred stock (\$1,500,000) in Whatcom Farmers Co-op. Preferred stock is savings held by your Co-op to be used as operating capital and is normally retired 10 years later in order to keep the Co-op financially strong.

Your Board of Directors is committed to a 10 year stock retirement. Stock Retirement checks for 1999 (10 years ago) total over \$ 350,000 and will be mailed after the Annual Meeting. You should also know that the Board of Directors usually approves stock retirement for those members who are over 70 years old and any deceased stockholders upon request.

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General Manager, Rich Stipe

Board of Directors:

Jeff Bedlington, President

Bud VanDyk, Vice President

Jerry Juergens, Secretary

Randy Honcoop, Director

Jon DeJong, Director

Andy Enfield, Director

Ed DeWilde, Director

Whatcom Farmers Co-op News is published periodically as the need presents itself. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

The election of a good Board of Directors who are committed to its continued success is **YOUR** responsibility. The term of each of our seven director positions is three years. This year we have two expiring terms. If you own one share of common stock (voting stock) in WHATCOM FARMERS CO-OP, please come and be involved in the decision-making process of your Co-op by casting your vote. The nominating committee has selected candidates for nominations. Additional qualified candidates may be nominated from the floor at the Annual Meeting on Friday March 26th.

DIRECTOR CANDIDATES

VOTE FOR THREE

ANDY ENFIELD —

Andy lives on the Hammer Road near Lynden, and has farmed his whole life. He farms with his brother, Adam, and their father, Marvin under the name Enfield Farms Inc. which is a large raspberry and blueberry production and processing business west of Lynden. Andy graduated from WSU in 2001 and believes Whatcom Farmers Co-op is good for our community and is a quality business serving the local agricultural needs of farmers.



BUD VANDYK —

Bud farms in partnership with his dad, Pete, on a 650 cow dairy on the Van Dyk Road just south of Lynden. Bud and his wife Susan have three children. He has been in the dairy business for 36 years. They buy all of their farm supplies, fuel, fertilizer & seed from the Co-op. Bud has served on the Board for 12 years. He is very interested in the success of Whatcom Farmers Co-op and is willing to continue as your Director.



RANDY HONCOOP —

Randy and his wife, Leslie, live on the Northwood Road near Lynden where they own a 55 acre raspberry farm. They have 3 children and have been in the raspberry business for the past 24 years. Randy believes that farmers should be involved with issues affecting agriculture and its future in Whatcom County. He has been serving on the Board for the last 6 years and is willing to continue representing you.



WRITE IN CANDIDATE —

Interested candidates should contact Whatcom Farmers Co-op's office for more information. Nominations from the floor are always welcome at the Annual Meeting!



Locally Owned since 1982

COUNTRY STORE

A Division of Whatcom Farmers Co-op

ANYONE CAN SHOP AT WHATCOM FARMERS CO-OP!



Yes, we are a cooperative...organized for your benefit. Everyone gets special treatment at WHATCOM FARMERS CO-OP regardless of where they live or how they make their living. There is no cost to join and no need to be a member to take advantage of the fine products we sell. We're here to help anyone who needs gasoline, diesel fuel, heating oil, propane gas, pet supplies, feed, horse tack, western clothing, lawn & garden products, farm supplies and the list goes on.

And the additional benefit to you is our year end dividend, paid back to you each year, based upon your purchases and our profitability. So when you are looking for quality products, backed by friendly, helpful service, come-on-in and check us out!

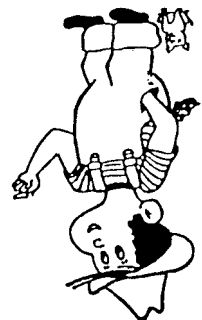
COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Whatcom Farmers Co-op offers \$500.00 scholarships to graduating high school seniors planning to prepare for a career in agriculture! The future for qualified young people interested in agriculture looks bright. The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture projects an annual shortage of 4000 college graduates in agriculture. Your Co-op supports deserving students from Whatcom County interested in a college education in agriculture. Stop in and pick up an application for our "Careers in Agriculture" scholarships before April 15th.



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

415 DEPOT RD. • LYNDEN, WA 98264



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