

# **AGP<sup>®</sup> NEWS**

*Serving Cooperatives and Agricultural Producers*

A PUBLICATION OF **Ag Processing Inc** a cooperative, Winter 2023

An aerial photograph of a large industrial facility, likely a grain processing plant. In the foreground, several large, cylindrical metal storage tanks are visible. In the background, there are several large, light-colored industrial buildings, a tall white distillation column, and a train of black tanker cars. The facility is situated in a rural area with fields and a small town in the distance under a cloudy sky.

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FOR 40 YEARS**



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I hope everyone is enjoying the holidays. As much as I like the Christmas season, one eye is on AGP’s upcoming 40th Annual Meeting, which will be held on January 19, 2024. The management team looks forward to reporting on the Company’s performance this past year and providing their views on what lies ahead. The business reports will be followed by an inspiring keynote speaker and a great entertainer Friday evening. You will find more details regarding the Annual Meeting later in this newsletter.

We are also exited to announce a new leadership appointment at AGP. Congratulations to Wayne Johnson on his well-deserved promotion to Vice President of Transportation. Wayne is a familiar face to many of our members after holding marketing leadership roles at several of our facilities. I was fortunate enough to start my career at Sheldon, IA and worked with Wayne where he assisted me in learning merchandising basics. Wayne was a great mentor and always stressed the importance of maintaining good relations with our member-owners.

Wayne is replacing Senior Vice President of Transportation, Greg Twist, who retired in December. Though I look forward to working with Wayne and seeing what new ideas he will bring to the position, Greg will be truly missed. I had the pleasure of working for Greg as a merchandiser in Omaha for many years. Greg has leadership qualities that I admire. One that really stands out is his ability to build a team. During his time as Vice President of Marketing, and later leading the transportation group, Greg developed teams that were willing to work hard and always tried to exceed expectations. Greg was considerate to his co-workers and, in turn, was respected by everyone at AGP. Greg, thank you for your many years of service to the Company and we wish you and Pam the best in your retirement.

One last note on retirements, I would be remiss not to mention the upcoming departure of Gary Nelson as Executive Director from the Port of Grays Harbor. Gary has championed Port of Grays Harbor developments for 24 years and was instrumental in AGP’s decision to invest in Aberdeen, WA. We appreciate all the years of working with Gary and his team.

See you in a couple weeks at the Annual Meeting.

  
Chris Schaffer  
Chief Executive Officer

Twist Retires, Johnson Promoted



Greg Twist  
Senior Vice President  
of Transportation

Greg Twist, Senior Vice President of Transportation, retired in December after almost 30 years with AGP. Greg joined the Company in December of 1994 in the role of Transportation Manager before progressing onto the Centralized Rail Trading Team in 1996. Greg continued his leadership within AGP to include the role of Merchandising Manager at Dawson, MN in 1997. In 1999, he moved to a similar role at the Hastings, NE facility. Greg moved back to the corporate office as Director of Merchandising in 2001. He was promoted to Vice President of Soy Marketing in 2002 and to Senior Vice President in 2005. Greg took on the role of Senior Vice President of Transportation in 2011 and led AGP’s efforts in this area until his retirement. We are very appreciative to Greg for his years of service and valuable contributions to the cooperative system.



Wayne Johnson  
Vice President  
of Transportation

Wayne Johnson succeeds Greg as AGP’s Vice President of Transportation. Wayne started his career at AGP as a Merchandising Trainee in Omaha in 1990. He was promoted to Merchandiser in 1991 and later accepted a transfer to Sheldon, IA in the same position. Wayne transferred to Eagle Grove, IA in 1995 as Assistant Merchandising Manager. In December of 1995, Wayne was promoted to Merchandising Manager at Mason City, IA and later, in 2004, he accepted a transfer to Sergeant Bluff, IA, also as the Merchandising Manager. In 2013, Wayne was promoted to Regional Merchandising Manager, and in 2019, he was promoted to Regional Director of Merchandising. Wayne was promoted to Assistant Vice President of Transportation last year.

Nelson Retiring from POGH Leadership



Gary Nelson  
Executive Director,  
Port of Grays Harbor

After nearly 24 years, Port of Grays Harbor Executive Director Gary Nelson has announced he will retire on March 31, 2024. Gary was hired as Executive Director in April 2000, when the Port had only 21 vessel calls handling 85,000 metric tons of cargo with an operating budget of just \$5.2 million. This year, the Port is projected to have 100 vessel calls and handle more than three million metric tons of cargo with an operating budget of nearly \$40 million.

Gary was Chairman of the American Association of Port Authorities from 2019 to 2020, chaired the Washington Public Ports Association Legislative Committee, and served on the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association Executive Board. He also oversaw the completion of the deepening of the Grays Harbor Navigation Channel to its congressionally authorized depth.

Leonard Barnes, the Port’s current Deputy Executive Director, was selected to replace Gary once he retires.

On the cover: A photo looking northeast at AGP’s biodiesel facility in Algona, IA.









# Candidates Nominated for AGP’s Board of Directors

## AREA 1 - MANAGER

IOWA (UNOPPOSED)



**Rob Jacobs**  
Rock Valley, IA  
*Incumbent*

Rob Jacobs currently serves as the CEO of Cooperative Farmers Elevator (CFE) in Rock Valley, IA, a position he has held for eight years. Prior to CFE, Rob was the General Manager of Cooperative Elevator Association in Ocheyedan, IA for 12 years. He graduated from Iowa Lakes Community College in Emmetsburg, IA with an Ag Business degree. Rob was elected to the AGP Board of Directors in 2021.

Rob has served on numerous agricultural-related boards, including as a Director for Associated Benefits Corporation, Director and past President of United Services Association, past member and President of Cooperative Credit Company Board, past member of the Land O’Lakes Feed Advisory Board, and past member of the Farm Credit Services Advisory Board. Rob is also an advisor of curriculum for Northwest Iowa Community College.

Rob’s community service includes Director of St. Joseph Parish, President St. Joseph Finance Committee, Vice Chair Hartley Economic Development, and 13 years as a volunteer on the Hartley Fire Department. Rob and his wife, Geri, have three daughters and four grandchildren.

*All Board positions are for three-year terms*

## AREA 3 - PRODUCER

ILLINOIS, KANSAS,  
MISSOURI, NEBRASKA, ALL OTHERS (UNOPPOSED)



**Larry Oltjen**  
Seneca, KS  
*Incumbent*

Larry Oltjen is a member of Ag Partners Cooperative, Inc. in Hiawatha, KS. He has 42 years of Board service, including past Chairman at Ag Partners Cooperative and Brown County Cooperative (one of the merging cooperatives that formed Ag Partners). He has served on the AGP Board of Directors since 2009.

Larry farms 5,000 acres in partnership with his wife, Marty, and son, Michael, near Robinson, KS, growing soybeans and corn. In addition to his service to cooperatives, Larry was active in the livestock industry. He was President of the Kansas Livestock Association, Chairman of the Kansas Beef Council, a Director for the Cattlemen’s Beef Promotion and Research Board, and served on the Executive Board of the National Livestock and Meat Board. In addition, Larry is a member of the American Soybean Association, the National Corn Growers Association, the Kansas Farm Bureau, and other producer associations.

Larry is the Board Chairman of the Upper Wolf Lutheran Church in Robinson. Larry and Marty have two children.

## AREA 2 - PRODUCER

MINNESOTA, NORTH DAKOTA,  
SOUTH DAKOTA, WISCONSIN



**Jason Johnke**  
Burbank, SD

Jason Johnke serves as President on the Board of Directors of Southeast Farmers Coop in Burbank, SD, a position he has held for the last 10 years. He was previously Board Secretary for five years.

Jason farms 3,000 acres near Centerville, SD, growing corn, soybeans, and alfalfa. He also operates a 600 head cattle feedlot. He is a graduate of South Dakota State University with a degree in Animal Science. Jason has also completed training courses with the South Dakota Association of Cooperatives and CHS’s New Leaders Forum.

Jason’s community service includes Treasurer of the Delaware Township Board for 27 years.



**Tim Nagler**  
Holloway, MN

Tim Nagler farms 1,800 acres near Danvers, MN, raising corn and soybeans. He also runs a small cow/calf operation. Tim served on the Western Consolidated Cooperative Board of Directors in Holloway, MN from 2011 through 2023, when he reached his 12-year term limit. Tim held the position of Chairman from 2019 to 2023 and as Vice Chairman prior to that.

Tim earned his B.S. degree in General Agriculture with minors in Agronomy, Ag Business, and Ag Marketing from South Dakota State University.

In his community, Tim serves as Chief of Danvers Fire and EMS, Chairman of Six Mile Grove Township, President of the Benson FFA Alumni Board, and as a member of the finance committee for the Church of the Visitation. He and his wife, Erin, have three children, Grace (15), Aubrey (12), and Graham (8).

*All Board positions are for three-year terms*



AGP Welcomes Filipino Trade Team



The Wilsons, along with representatives from AGP and the Iowa Soybean Association, pose for a photo after harvesting a few rows.



Lowell Wilson  
AGP Board Chairman  
Primghar, IA

As part of their visit to the United States, a trade team from the Philippines spent an afternoon at the farm of AGP Board Chairman Lowell Wilson and his wife, Eunice. Lowell has served on the AGP Board of Directors since 1985. The Wilsons farm over 2,800 acres in Primghar, IA where they raise corn and soybeans and custom finish hogs.

“Visits like this are a lot of fun. Many foreign customers have never been to the United States or stepped foot on an actual soybean field,” Wilson said. “I enjoy educating them about what we do as farmers. They even got a chance to participate in harvest by riding a combine. Everyone wants a story with their food. The more educated someone is, the more there is a connection to it.”

After the farm tour, the Filipino delegation visited AGP operations in Eagle Grove, IA and the Port of Grays Harbor in Aberdeen, WA. They also met with multiple state soybean check-off representatives.

“With the soybean crush expansion upon us, it is great to introduce customers to our AGP team and our member-owners,” said Craig Pietig, AGP Vice President of Ag Products. “We want them to leave with an understanding of the soybean production process and the role AGP’s facilities play.”



Top upper-left: The trade team, which included about 30 people, learned how soybeans from the U.S. help support international markets. Top bottom-left: Some visitors to the farm got a quick lesson on how to combine soybeans. Top right: Chairman Wilson shows visitors some farm equipment. Bottom: The trade mission also included a stop at the Port of Grays Harbor where the group saw new construction underway at Terminal 2.





- Farm Service Cooperative in Harlan, IA named Nick Schechinger as General Manager, succeeding Kevin Rugaard. Nick was previously the coop's Agronomy Division Manager.
- Evan Wielenga was selected as the new General Manager at Hull Cooperative Association in Hull, IA. He succeeds Ed Westra who retired after 41 years with the coop. Evan joined Hull Coop in 1999 as an agronomist and became Assistant Manager in 2018.
- Farmers Cooperative Elevator Company in Hanley Falls, MN announced the selection of Kevin Doppenberg as the coop's new General Manager/CEO. Kevin was previously the Director of Sales and Marketing for a livestock feed company in Iowa.
- Hunter Grain Company in Hunter, ND merged with Clifford Farmers Cooperative in Clifford, ND (non-member) on December 1, 2023. Steve Baldock is the General Manager. Scott Murch, General Manager at Hunter Grain, is the Assistant Manager.

### Wager & Frields Announce Retirements



Jon Wager, AGP Merchandising Manager in Dawson, MN, retired in December after almost 39 years with the Company. Jon started at AGP in 1985 as a Merchandiser at the Dawson, MN facility, where he stayed for his entire career. He was promoted to Merchandising Manager in 2019.



Kerry Frields, AGP Senior Merchandiser in Eagle Grove, IA, retired in December after more than 31 years with the Company. Kerry began his AGP career in 1992. He worked in operations at AGP facilities in: Sheldon, IA; Mason City, IA; and Dawson, MN. While in Dawson, Kerry shifted over to merchandising and also worked in that capacity in Emmetsburg, IA and Eagle Grove. Kerry was promoted to Senior Merchandiser in 2019.

## Chuck Schafer Inducted into Iowa Cooperative Hall of Fame



Hall of Fame inductee Chuck Schafer and his wife, Sherri, are congratulated by current and former AGP Board members and AGP management.

In November, the annual meeting of the Iowa Institute for Cooperatives (IIC) was held at Iowa State University in Ames. Chuck Schafer, formerly of AGP's Board of Directors, was the latest inductee into the Iowa Cooperative Hall of Fame. Chuck worked for cooperatives in northern Iowa for over 40 years, including 33 years as General Manager at North Iowa Cooperative in Thornton, IA. Chuck was elected to AGP's Board of Directors in 2010 and served for 13 years until his retirement.

### Promoting AminoPlus®



AGP employees attended the 2023 World Dairy Expo in Madison, WI this past fall. The event was an opportunity for the team to speak with visitors about AGP's AminoPlus® product. AminoPlus® is AGP's high performance soy bypass protein used in dairy rations, and is produced at four Company facilities. Pictured left to right are: Alex Hines, AGP Senior Merchandiser; Ramsey Nielsen, AGP Merchandiser; and Alli Schmidt, AGP Merchandiser.

### AGP Attends SDSA AgOutlook



In December, the 19th annual AgOutlook Trade Show and Conference was hosted by the South Dakota Soybean Association in Sioux Falls, SD. AgOutlook was developed to facilitate networking between leaders in ag business and area farmers. The show drew over 500 attendees wanting to learn about the newest developments in technology, weather, and marketing. Pictured above: Kyle German, AGP Merchandiser, and Matt Smith, AGP Merchandising Manager, talk with two South Dakota farmers.



Ron Velder, retired CEO of Farmers Cooperative in Dorchester, NE, was an inductee into the Nebraska Cooperative Council Hall of Fame at their November annual meeting. Ron started at Farmers Cooperative in 1973. He became CEO in 1994, and held the position until his retirement in 2019. Mark Sandeen (right), AGP Chief Marketing Officer, was in attendance and congratulated Ron on his years of coop service.







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