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Contact: Megghan Honke  
(517) 353-3175, ext. 229

**HUMMINGBIRDS, ORGANIZING TIPS AND FARM TOUR PLANNING 101:  
GLRDC SPOUSE'S PROGRAM OFFERS VARIETY OF TOPICS FOR DAIRY WOMEN**

Dairywomen who opt to attend the annual spouse's program at the seventh annual Great Lakes Regional Dairy Conference (GLRDC) will find a variety of interesting topics awaiting them at this year's Partners Program.

Topics on this year's program range from learning how to establish a natural hummingbird habitat in your backyard to being introduced to the agriculture industry in South Africa to taking home tips for organizing your home and office. Other subjects that will be discussed during the two-day Partners Program include an instructional session on social media.

The 2009 GLRDC – of which the Partners Program is a part – is scheduled for Feb. 5-7 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Center (28<sup>th</sup> Street) in Grand Rapids.

Guest speaker Amanda Nolz, an agricultural communications student at South Dakota State University, will offer two insightful presentations, "CSI: Activist Chants, the Mythical Media and Confused Consumers" and "The Future of Ag: Where Did the Young People Go." Some may know Nolz as the 2006 National Beef Ambassador who organized the 500 person strong walkout of a sold-out Carrie Underwood concert during the 2006 Future Farmers of America national convention in Indianapolis. Today Nolz is the author of the blog, "Chewing the Cud" and Web editor for the daily blog for BEEF magazine; she also hosts her own radio program.

In addition to presenting at the Partners Program, Nolz will also hold a session for the youth on Saturday – "Youth in Agriculture: The Future is Bright!" – during the breed association programming portion of the conference.

Dr. Bernie Ervin, professor emeritus from The Ohio State University, will talk about building a positive reputation with your family's business, and Colleen Jackson, 2006 Michigan senior Dairy Ambassador, will highlight what she learned from a study abroad trip to South Africa this past summer.

Kathi and Mike Rock, self-taught hummingbird experts who were recently featured in an issue of the magazine *Midwest Living*, will be on hand to share what they have learned about hummingbirds over the past 20 years and offer tips on how to create an attractive habitat in your own backyard. Donna Hrezo, founder of [ilove2organize.com](http://ilove2organize.com), will energize participants by offering simple, take-home strategies for organizing the home and office.

In addition, Staci Garcia, coordinator of public and member relations for the United Dairy Industry of Michigan, and Sara Long, communications manager for the animal agriculture and animal welfare and behavior initiatives at Michigan State University, will conduct the session, "Social Media 101: What You Wanted to Know but Were Afraid to Ask." They will define the latest buzz words in social media and discuss how the trend to virtual communication affects all of us.

Long, co-chair of the Partners Program planning committee, says that the purpose of the program is to offer a relaxed yet socially engaging atmosphere for today's busy farm women to share stories with one another while learning about interesting topics.

"This year's program offers a mix of topics," she says. "Many of us live and talk farming every day, and even though many of us are passionate about our livelihoods, it's also nice to step back and be exposed to learning about other interesting things in a safe and familiar environment.

"I can guarantee you that the conversation will always revert back to the dairy farm, what's happening there, how prices and economics and today's crisis affects each of us differently but yet in very similar ways," she says. "But this type of program also offers each of us a chance for taking a step back and seeing what else is happening around us."

For complete registration and schedule information for the 2009 GLRDC, visit [www.glrdc.msu.edu](http://www.glrdc.msu.edu), or call Megghan Honke, education program coordinator, at 517-353-3175, ext. 229.

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