

Dairy Girl DIRECTION

Issue 22 | May/June 2020



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#StrongerTogetHER

“Today is the new normal.” This is something Dr. Mike Lormore of Zoetis said several times as he led an Enhance Webinar about responding to COVID-19. I would add that tomorrow will be the ‘next’ new normal and the day after that and so on. We have no idea what will happen and we certainly have no control over most of it.

I’ll admit, I was really stuck at the end of April. Stuck wondering what was going to happen to my farm as the market crashed. Afraid my family or my employees would get sick. Worried that dairy farmers wouldn’t receive the help we need. Stressed I couldn’t help all of you enough. Scared for what this was doing to so many whose mental well being was already fragile. Yep, I was stuck in a rut. Maybe justifiably so? Maybe you were there too? Maybe you still are?

Then, my dear friend and Vice President of Dairy Girl Network, Kristy Pagel, started saying things like: “We need to help our members shift. We have to look to the future. We need to help change the mindset. We need to get ourselves and our members refocused.” She went on to press the point, “I don’t know about you, but I won’t stay stuck. I refuse.”

When she started saying these things, I wasn’t ready to hear them. I had to ruminate a few days. Then, like every good kick in the butt, I realized she was right. I could shift. I needed to shift. I immediately thought of all of you. You are the thought leaders for your teams and your families. But hey, extend yourself some grace if it takes you

a bit to shift your view and see a positive future right now. You will get there, but this is a lot. The beauty is we have friends like Kristy. Throughout DGN we have women who are helping one another move on topics big and small.

One of those areas we have helped shift our industry is on mental health awareness. It has been one year since DGN started #StrongerTogetHER. Personal stories, webinars and additional resources are the foundation of this program. Stories of hurt, pain and sadness have been shared. These stories are your stories, they are real. They are the gritty kind of real. Each included coping and healing, sometimes triumph, always profound bravery. Each strong woman who opened her soul to share was instantly wrapped in love by our members. Thank you.

During May, you saw DGN shift our focus to Mental Health Awareness Month. Our staff began planning last year, but then the entire world changed. In the last month, our lives, already inherent with stress, became something entirely more consuming.

Our #StrongerTogetHER discussions and resources have never been more important than they are right now. I often say, “Action binds Anxiety.” Well, now is the time for action. Now is the time for a shift. We hope the great information and the support you feel at DGN, and here in this newsletter, can help you shift to be ready for the new norm, every day.

Laura Daniels

Dairy Girl Network President and Founder

Thank You

to our sponsors.

Vision



Sustaining



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INDUSTRY LEADERS TO WATCH

Dairy Girl Network is highlighting outstanding women leaders within our industry. View a few leaders you should be watching.

Jackie Klippenstein, Kansas

Senior Vice President of Government, Industry and Community Relations for Dairy Farmers of America

Website: www.dfamilk.com Facebook and Instagram: @dfamilk

About Jackie: Since joining DFA in 2008, Jackie has focused on federal and state legislative and regulatory issues and has played an active role in member services. She provides leadership over the Cooperative's various community relations activities and also serves on the boards of the National Milk Producers Federation, Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture and the Agricultural Business Council of Kansas City. Prior to joining DFA, Jackie spent nearly 15 years in Washington, D.C. as an advocate for agricultural interests and as a congressional aide, having worked for members of both the U.S. House and Senate.



Word of Advice from Jackie: "All voices are needed in order for the industry to be successful and maximize its potential. Make sure yours is heard."

Mary Kraft, Colorado

CFO and Systems Manager, 6,000 head milking Holsteins and 6,000 head heifer grow lot

Twitter: @marysdairy

About Mary: Mary is a 4th generation dairy farmer who wanted off the farm. "The midnight shift before school every day made me want out, then I discovered that I could teach and train people to work both alongside others and independently. My husband and I broke from my family and started our own tiny dairy with 125 cows" she said. Through 7 remodels, they expanded their old facility to milk 1,500 head, then embarked on building a dairy from the ground up. They now run the 2 dairies together to milk over 6,000 head 3X, plus farming 1,000 acres. Mary



also said "Once we figured out how to be excellent communicators, the expansions got easier and easier. We even did intensive immersion programs across Mexico to develop Spanish speaking skills." Mary serves on the Dairy Max dairy promotion board, Agfinity Co-operative, NCBA's long range task force, was the first female President of the Colorado Livestock Association and shows dressage horses nationally.

Word of Advice from Mary: "Proactively pursue R&D (that is rob and duplicate). Go see others at work and harness their good habits, workflow and ideas."

Marilyn Hershey, Pennsylvania

Ar Joy Farms, LLC and Chair of DMI

Twitter: @dairy_activist Instagram: @marilynhershey
LinkedIn: Marilyn Hershey

About Marilyn: Marilyn and her husband, Duane, own and operate a dairy farm in southeast PA. Being thirty miles north of the Chesapeake Bay, sustainable farming has always been on their radar. In 2017, they installed a digester enabling them to process their cow's manure and local food



waste into reusable products for the barn. Soon after becoming more involved in Dairy Management Inc. (DMI), Marilyn moved into the officers group. After serving as Vice Chair of DMI for two years, she had the opportunity to run for Chair of the Board. She just started her third year as Chair and finds it very fulfilling and rewarding. She is currently starting a posting trend on social media with the hashtag #cowoftheday. If you have a good cow photo to go in this campaign, email it to COWotd@gmail.com.

Word of Advice from Marilyn: "Relationships matter. I see the value of strong relationships every day. Whether referring to DMI staff or farmer-to-farmer, relationships are the key to maintaining a strong checkoff and to attaining our goal of dairy sales and consumer trust. For us as women, I would also add confidence. Having courage to step into a new situation or forwarding our position is not always easy and sometimes we talk ourselves out of the very position that we are called into. Sometimes that takes a lot of confidence, trust and courage, but we don't get there unless we take that step."

INDUSTRY LEADERS TO WATCH, continued

Amy Thronsdon, Wisconsin

President and Partner, Advanced Comfort Technology | DCC Waterbeds

Website: www.DCCWaterbeds.com LinkedIn: Amy Thronsdon
Facebook: @DCCWaterbeds

About Amy: Amy served in various roles with AmeriCorps and Peace Corps (China), both as a volunteer and staff member for a number of years. After her public service, she joined her family's business. Her dad doesn't milk cows, but he is as passionate about his business of cow comfort as any dairy farmer is about his or her cows. Since joining the business, she has struggled with how they will successfully lead this business into the future. She watched her parents do it their way, but found that wasn't going to work for her. She knows this struggle is not unique, but she has found a lot of joy in wrestling with the big questions. She said it's a work in progress to find out how it fits together, but she is thankful to be on the journey with a supportive family and hard-working team.



Word of Advice from Amy: "Be kind, for everyone is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Possibly even yourself."

Lauren Evangelo, California

Vice President, Key Relationship Manager for Farm Credit West and Owner/Partner at Bar E Dairy

Website: www.FarmCreditWest.com Instagram: @levangel0

About Lauren: Lauren was born and raised in Petaluma, CA to a family that did not come from an agricultural background. She joined 4-H at a young age, and with the help of her childhood babysitter's family, she got her first replacement heifer at 10 years old which led to her having her own dairy herd of 15 head by the time she was a senior in high school. Her passion for dairy then led her



to Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo for college, where she graduated with a double major in Agricultural Business and Dairy Science Production. Right after graduation, she took an internship with Farm Credit West, where she has now been for 14 years! As a loan officer she manages loan portfolios, where a majority of her customers are dairy operations. In 2014, Lauren and her husband went into partnership with his parents and they milk over 1000 with a full support stock program and farm over 150 acres of wheat and corn. She is also a co-chairing/founding member of the Western Classic Junior Dairy Show.

Word of Advice from Lauren: "You can't pour from an empty cup." I have this quote posted on my computer screen so I see it as a daily reminder. Taking care of yourself is key as you cannot serve your family, others or be your best if you are not at YOUR best. Get an adequate amount of sleep, move daily and do something that brings you pleasure every day!"

Martha Trott, Illinois

Vice President, Human Resources for DeLaval in the Americas Cluster

LinkedIn: Martha Trott

About Martha: Martha has worked in Human Resources for her entire career in different industries including Automotive, Oil and Gas, Consumer Packaged Goods, and now Dairy. Martha runs the HR function in the Americas cluster for DeLaval including Talent Management, Training and Development, Employee Relations, HR Systems, and Compensation and Benefits. Martha co-founded Women in Blue five years ago with the goal of solidifying DeLaval as a top employer for Women in Dairy. She has always been passionate about what motivates people to do their best work and how to get things out of the way to allow them to flourish. In the last several weeks Martha has used the motto of "Keep Employees Safe and Keep the Lights on" as we navigate this unprecedented time.



Word of Advice from Martha: "Prioritize your whole self first. Keep your center and calm in the midst of the storm. Double down on the self-care you need so your inner voice is clear to make decisions." ♦

How to Lead Through Crisis

Written by Elizabeth Griffith for Dairy Herd Management

[See the original article here.](#)

Anyone can lead through periods of calm. When we have great milk prices, healthy calves, and perfect weather, leading is easy.

Sometimes things go completely off course with a crisis and that is where your leadership is tested. But disruptions also create opportunities for those who lead well through the crisis.

We often delude ourselves into thinking good outcomes, (good milk prices, low feed prices, good health) are within our control. But let's be honest. Many life and business events are often beyond our control or even our influence.

So, what can be done? Should we go with the flow and get tossed around with every disruption to our business and lives? No!

A simple response is always be prepared. Prepared for what? Many times, the events are beyond anything we have seen before. We have no prior experience to fall back on. We need a strategy that is flexible and can be utilized whenever life throws us a curve.

Disruptions and major events have always been a part of business. Think of disease outbreaks in dairy cattle, manure spills, and farm accidents.

Each crisis follows a similar pattern. There is an event that leads to a crisis. There is also a response from ourselves and our teams. Taken together, the outcome is formed.

Event + Response = Outcome

Events happen. We don't have any control over them. But our response is something we do have control over, and our response is what defines the outcome.

Let's look at some ways you can manage through any crisis:

- 1. Put people first.** To reduce risk for you and your employees; focus on the people. Make certain that everyone is always taking proper safety precautions to protect their health and well-being. Implement protocols and safety training. Communicate and demonstrate your desire to maintain health and safety in the workplace.
- 2. Don't freeze.** Most people freeze when faced with a crisis. When we are mentally overloaded with too much stimulus, we freeze. We spin our wheels and make no meaningful progress. Your role as a leader should be to keep your teams moving. Be flexible and agile and ready to implement new ideas. Provide your employees with actions they can take even if they are small. Provide direction on what can be done and who will do it.
- 3. Prioritize your actions.** In a crisis many events could be addressed but not everything is important at the same time. Prioritize your team for what is most important right now and what can wait.
- 4. Separate facts from opinions/guesses.** As we watch the COVID crisis unfold, we are learning there are many opinions and guesses

and few facts. Once the event has passed, we will obtain better knowledge. A leader needs to separate the information that is factual from opinions and guesses as it pertains to YOUR business. Take the time to determine what facts need a formulated response and which do not.

- 5. Control what is working.** It's easy to get mentally stuck in what is not working and ignore what is working. Use what is working while working through the crisis. You may not be able to control the milk price, but you can continue to focus on the cost of production, milk quality, and reproduction. Control what is working.
- 6. Be cheerful and optimistic.** Your actions lead to your employee's reactions. Cultivate a positive environment by possessing a positive attitude, humor, and wit. Each day look for the good. Your team will take their cues from you. Keep your cool and keep smiling.

In times of crisis, your leadership skills will be tested, and it is during those times it will be clear what you are made of what your team is made of. While the event and resulting crisis are beyond our control, how we respond will often determine our future success. ♦



Dairy Girl Network | National Conference
November 3 - 5, 2020 • Lake Geneva, WI

Forward TogetHER will offer pre- and post-conference sessions, over 25 breakout and general sessions, networking opportunities and a Showcase trade show. The On Demand coverage of **Forward TogetHER** will allow for those unable to attend the conference in person to watch and learn from the comfort of their home and farm offices around the globe. This event brings together dairywomen, both producers and industry members, to learn, grow and recharge their batteries.

For full details about the conference visit DairyGirlNetwork.com and visit the conference page. An agenda and other travel details are listed there!

Interested in sponsorship opportunities? [Contact us](#) to learn about unique sponsorships for Forward TogetHER. ♦

A sneak peek at some of the Forward TogetHER speakers:

General Session Speaker



JENNIFER VAN OS, PH.D.

**Animal Welfare:
Essential for the Cow, the
Producer and the Consumer**

Session sponsored by

General Session Panel Member

TARA VANDER DUSSEN

**Why Net Zero Matters:
Sustainability Panel Discussion**

Session sponsored by



General Session Panel Member

KRYSTA HARDEN

**Why Net Zero Matters:
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Breakout Session Speaker



**MONICA KRAMER
McCONKEY, LPC**

**Building Resiliency
and Finding Joy**

Session sponsored by

Breakout Session Speaker



ELSIE GONZÁLEZ, M.S.

**Understanding Learning
Styles for Effective
Employee Training**

Session sponsored by

General Session Speaker

LAURA DANIELS

**Living and Leading with
Clarity and Compassion**



Thank you to the DGN Forward TogetHER sponsors:

Dairy Herd Management, Dairy Management Inc., Cargill, Compeer, DeLaval, Diamond V, Farm Credit, Land O'Lakes, Merck Animal Health, Michael Best, The National Dairy FARM Program, GPS Dairy Consulting, Zoetis, Boehringer Ingelheim, UdderTech, Rabobank, ImmuCell, StateLine Vet Clinic, DenkaVet, TechMix, Holstein International, Genex, Festival Foods, Calf Star and 4D Ag Fashion.

Dear DGN Exchange Anonymously



Early this month, we featured an anonymous Dear DGN post. The Dairy Girl Network team felt this question was one we all struggle with and would be helpful to share some responses with you! Remember, you are not alone!

“Help me with time management. I try very hard to manage my time wisely and be on time, however, with farm life, it is just sometimes overwhelming and chaotic. What are your tips and hacks to manage your time wisely. How do you do so when juggling a family and operating a farm (where everything literally can change in a few minutes)?”

“I wish I had some people I knew to refer you to, but I feel like the women I know who are farming all struggle with this. So I don’t have hints, but know that you aren’t alone.” - Carrie

“Speaking to the being on time part - I set alarms and reminders to help me remember things. For example, pre-COVID I had an alarm to remind me 15 minutes before my kids’ bus arrives so I can wrap up what I’m doing and be there on time. Missed it once and the embarrassment prompted a change. For things in my calendar, like a conference call or a meeting, I set a reminder with time in advance so I can jump on the call or get cleaned up for the meeting. My brain is way too unreliable and distractions certainly come up!” - Kendra

“I’ve been working on being a lot more fluid and attempting to go with the flow better. Also learning how to say “No” to some commitments so you don’t have as much on your table. I have a huge calendar on my kitchen wall so I know what’s going on for the day. I also set alarms on my phone for calls and meetings.” - Jodi

“I use Google Tasks, you can set daily, weekly, and monthly reminders. Allows different lists for farm and home (I also use this for self-care reminders)” - Samantha

“As someone who has always struggled with this - Alarms are great! Murphy’s law is usually stronger. The best thing you can do is to try your best, prioritize and surround yourself with people and activities that understand your situation. Also learn to say NO. I also tried to never promise things to my children. I always said, We will try! Also, if part of a group or committee I would sign up for some of the behind the scene tasks that could be done before an event or when my schedule allowed! Good Luck and most of all LOVE Yourself!” - Elaine

“This is a BIG STRUGGLE FOR ME! I have tried all the organizational plans and have read all the books on time management. But the answer (where I’m try to get to is) “Be at peace”. Is your family fed, clothed and sheltered? Are your animals fed and cared for? Know what your absolutes. Then be at peace if not everything gets done.

Basic tips:

- *Try to tidy your house for 10 minutes each day. I roughly follow the Fly Lady plan. If everything is in its place you don’t spend time looking for things.*
- *Write down your meal plan once a week. Keep hot dogs and frozen pizzas for the days that things just get out of control.*
- *Use alarms and reminders on your phone.*
- *Have a “what are you doing today” meeting with your husband. We meet after morning milking to go through our day plans. This meeting is usually five minutes of us standing outside the barn chatting. It where I learn that he might need to me*

to do a part run or he might need a kid help him with something. Both of us are the type of people who make plans in our heads, but forget to tell anyone. Talking it out helps.” - Emily

“I don’t have magic answers but I do have a reality. I struggled with this in a huge way for 30 years. We had multiple businesses, 4 very active kids who had their interests, and we were involved in everything we could be considering our chore schedule. We milked 2 times a day and ran a veterinary business, both of which had “emergencies” that messed with any time management. Plus, I found (find) that I am guilty of interrupting myself! I thought I was a hopeless messy, but I now know that in order for us to be involved with all that we were involved with, it took choices, and a perfectly organized house, laundry, lawn, and being on time, etc., was not possible. Now, we have entered a different phase of life, and the cows no longer live here. Neither do our four sons. And voila, I am typically caught up on laundry, the house is reasonably organized, I am not often late for events, and I can host overnight company (pre-COVID) with barely a moment’s notice. I reflect on this fairly often and find that it wasn’t a failure on my part before, it was a choice. And honestly, I would keep the involvement, the juggling of so many awesome experiences and everything before I would a perfect-looking life. But it is a choice, and it doesn’t have to be one extreme over another, I’m thinking. A little coming to the middle might be less stressful, but please don’t be hard on yourself! Just my 2 cents...” -LuAnn

What have you found to be helpful? What are some things that you are struggling with? Go share in Exchange by DGN. ♦

The goal of Dear DGN is to provide dairywomen within the network the opportunity to ask a question anonymously to our virtual Facebook forum, Exchange. By submitting a question via the online form, the Dairy Girl Network profile will pose the question to Exchange to protect the asker’s identity. The form can be found at this address: <https://dairygirlnetwork.com/dear-dgn/>



Dairy Girl Q and A

This month we are featuring dairywoman **Emma Andrew-Swarthout** from New York. Emma is the Director of Dairy Industry Image for the American Dairy Association North East (ADANE) and aids in farmer relations. For Emma, this includes facilitating the DairyFAN program, which teaches farmers how to connect to consumers online, as well as ADANE's Virtual Farm Tour Program, which brings the farm to classrooms through ADANE's territory. She said, "My passion for dairy started while growing up on a farm. When I'm not working on behalf of farmers, I like competing for Team Chocolate Milk in full distance Ironman triathlons and half & full marathons. My training and racing has allowed me to reach the triathlon community online with the benefits of refueling with chocolate milk." We sat down with Emma and asked her some questions about ADANE's Virtual Farm Tours, how she is involved and what advice she has for ag education.

Q: Emma, you've helped create an awesome hub of resources of activities for kids during school closures. What void did you and ADANE see that needed filled and how did these ideas start?

A: We have an awesome team of creative and dedicated staff at ADANE that I am able to collaborate with to bring these ideas to life. The Virtual Farm Tour Program started in fall 2018. All of these tours are recorded and added to our YouTube Playlist, "Virtual Farm Tours." When it was required for people to stay home, our team jumped to action to promote our Virtual Farm Tours recordings both on social and traditional media. To date, we've reached 175,000 viewers with the Virtual Farm Tours.

Q: Your Farmer Video Series is a fun, interactive resource for kids. How did this concept start and how did you recruit your farmers to continue the videos week to week?

A: After the success of the Virtual Farm Tour recordings, we wanted to continue to meet the need parents had for educational and fun content for their kids. That's when our team came up with the "Fun of the Farm Facebook Series." We wanted to highlight our farmers in ADANE territory, both their farms and passions. We are fortunate to have really creative and social media savvy farmers here to work with, which made the process easier. It was hard because our staff couldn't help the farmer with the on-farm filming, normally we would provide support in that area. However, as you can see from the videos it wasn't an issue. It's been awesome to highlight our hardworking and talented farmers. The audience reactions to the series have been so positive and interested, and that is what has continued to drive the series and the creation of additional episodes. Through the first 4 weeks of the series we've reached 870,010 viewers.

Q: Where can our members find this series?

Each week we create a blog base library of the hosting farmer's episodes. These can be found on our website americandairy.com at our blog, "Dairy Diary."

Q: What was your favorite part of putting together these resources?

A: I love the collaboration between our team and the farmers. We usually plan out our theme for the week and the daily topics, but then we will have a planning call with the hosting farmer to talk it through. We really want each farmer host to bring their own personality to the episodes. It been awesome each week to bring each topic to life in collaboration with the hosting farmer.

Q: Do you have any words of advice/encouragement on ag education?

A: Find what works for you. Do you love social media? Hosting farm tours? School presentations? We all have different preferences, strengths and talents, so find the best form of AGvocacy for you and focus on that. It can be overwhelming to feel like you have to be everywhere all the time telling your story. Also, it's okay to take a step back sometimes, even if you love Instagram and sharing your story on that platform; it doesn't mean you don't need a break here and there. Give yourself grace and self-care when needed. We are in a unique time where many people are spending more time online and looking for fun, educational and/or lighthearted content. If you enjoy social media, it is a great time to get online and share your story.

Thank you for all of your time and hard work sharing dairy stories, Emma! If you want to follow along further, you can follow Emma's home farm on Facebook and Instagram at @elvifarmsllc or her personally on Instagram at @emmluvcow where she covers her love for dairy, triathlons, cats, cows and life. ♦

DGN Resource Hubs

See all of Dairy Girl Network's resource hubs on the [DGN website](#).

Our May #StrongerTogetHER campaign focused on taking action. If anyone is looking for additional resources (phone numbers, chats, podcasts, articles and more), go to our [#StrongerTogetHER hub](#). Did you follow along in May for our #StrongerTogetHER conversations? They can be found in our Facebook group, Exchange by Dairy Girl Network.

June is Dairy Month and we are partnering with DMI to bring you resources that you can use to spread the #DairyGood. Explore the educational and fun on the [resource hub](#) and use them on your own channels to promote dairy and all of its goodness.

Finally, DGN has compiled resources that will be helpful to farmers and industry members as we maneuver the COVID-19 situation. Find the resources on the [COVID-19 resource hub](#).

#StrongerTogetHER

Resources DAIRY GIRL NETWORK

Dairy Facts

Resources DAIRY GIRL NETWORK

COVID-19

Resources DAIRY GIRL NETWORK

Partnerships Drive Our Mission

The mission of Dairy Girl Network (DGN) is fueled by the support of our partners. Our partners are true believers of DGN and strive to enhance lives and create opportunities for all women in dairy. Working together, partners and the passionate DGN team continue to grow our program areas that impact thousands of dairywomen each year. We are excited to add several new partners to the DGN team!

Thank you to the Dairy Girl Network Vision, Sustaining and Catalyst level partners!

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"The Dairy Girl Network continues to impress us with the incredible things they do to connect, inspire and develop women who are dedicated to dairy. The future of our industry needs diverse leaders from across the country who can work together to strengthen our voice, and this group is helping lead the way." - Josh Hushon, Strategic Marketing Lead, Cargill

Is your business interested in becoming a sponsor in 2020 or for the Forward TogetHER conference? Dairy Girl Network needs your support to advance our mission now. Our organization has come so far so fast since our first networking event in 2013. Our program areas continue to grow, our impact on thousands of dairywomen each year multiplies, yet we can do more.

The future of Dairy Girl Network is bright, and our goals are set high, now is your opportunity to have a part in the network's growth. Partner with Dairy Girl Network to drive our mission even farther! If you are interested in learning more about our partnership opportunities please contact [Dairy Girl Network](#) today. ♦

To celebrate **June Dairy Month**, we are shining a light on those that are creating a positive impact in their communities and across the country. Stay tuned on our social media channels as we highlight these activities and charitable events that focus on the **#dairygood** and the incredible women behind them all month long. Make sure you are following us on **Facebook and Instagram!**



Board of Directors and Staff Members

Dairy Girl Network Board of Directors

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Front row, L-R; Renée Norman-Kenny, Anna-Lisa Laca, Laura Daniels, LuAnn Troxel and Andrea Brossard. Back row, L-R; Brenda Gilbertson, Mary Knigge, Kristy Pagel, Carrie Mess, Kelly Reed, Michelle Philibeck, Tami Smith, Amanda Borkowski and Leah Ziemba. Missing from photo are Michelle Schilter, Katie Dotterer-Pyle, Corinne Banker, Connie Kuber, and Rebecca Shaw.

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