

HLBE Holds Annual Meeting

by Carol Schreiber, *Tri County News*

The annual meeting of Heron Lake BioEnergy was held on Saturday, March 29, at the Heron Lake Community Center.

The members attending were treated to cookies, bars, coffee and juice, while registering and voting.

At the Annual Meeting, the members voted on the election of governors and amendments to the Member Control Agreement. HLBE said that members would be informed of the official results soon.

President of the Board Ferguson welcomed the crowd and gave a review of the history of the plant. A financial report was given by James Gerber, Chief Financial Officer for HLBE.

Brian Jennings was the featured speaker. Jennings is from the American Coalition of Ethanol, and talked about the importance of ethanol, and pointed out that less than one-fourth of the corn crop is used for ethanol.

Jennings explained that in 1944, there were 85 million acres of corn planted, the same number of acres planted in 2007. Production has drastically increased, rising from 33 bushels per acre in 1944 to 151 bushels per acre last year. ³That¹s an over 400% increase in productivity,² Jennings added. If trends continue, the production number will continue to increase.

New markets for ethanol are being developed, as Florida is now beginning to use ethanol. Other southern and eastern markets are opening as well. As markets increase, the demand for ethanol will continue.

In addition to voting at the meeting and hearing from Jennings, HLBE's members also received an update from HLBE management and had the opportunity to learn more about the progress of the company.

An open house is scheduled for August 23 at the Heron Lake BioEnergy plant. Watch for further information as that date approaches.