

Portage County Farm Bureau

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David Meihak - District Manager
(715) 630-4801

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

March 4-5

Madison Marriott West, Middleton



Women from the Wisconsin agriculture community are encouraged to attend the Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit presented by Badgerland Financial, Wisconsin Farm Bureau and University of Wisconsin-Extension.

Agenda Highlights

Friday, March 4

9-10 a.m. Registration
10-10:30 a.m. AgVocate of the Year Award Presentation
10:30-11:30 a.m. Keynote Panel: Women In Ag: Understanding
Where We've Been and Where We're Heading;
Moderator: Amy Pflugshaupt, Anchor and
Reporter, NBC 15 Madison
1-4:30 Breakout Sessions
7:30-10 p.m. Casino Night

Saturday, March 5

6:30-7:30 a.m. Workout: Water aerobics or boxing and cardio
8:30-9 a.m. Meet the 2016 AgVocate of the Year
9-10 a.m. Breakout Sessions
10:15-11 a.m. Brunch
11 a.m. Closing Keynote by Jerry Apps: The Importance of
Writing Your Own Story
12:15 p.m. Adjourn

Register by **February 26**. For more information, visit wiagwomenssummit.com.

Enjoy Some Wintertime Fun

Come and join fellow YFA members for a fun afternoon of sledding at Iverson Park in Stevens Point. Bring your sleds and family. Event dependent upon the weather so be sure to RSVP.

When: February 27, 12:30 p.m.

Where: Iverson Park, Stevens Point

There are three sledding hills, one snowboard hill and one sled hill designed for children six years and younger. There also are two, 300-foot toboggan slides. You can bring your own toboggan or you can rent one at the park.

RSVP by **February 23** to Portage County YFA chair Melissa Eron at 715.498.7013.





COUNTYnews

PORTAGE COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION

96th WFBF Annual Meeting Highlights



On December 5-7, Farm Bureau members from across Wisconsin gathered at the Kalahari Resorts in Wisconsin Dells to take part in the 96th WFBF Annual Meeting.

Members attended breakout sessions

including a panel of food stand chairs, Ag in the Classroom training and social media and advocating training.

Delegates discussed and voted on hard-hitting issues for agriculture and passed the proposed bylaw change that changed the name of the Women's Committee to the Promotion and Education Committee.

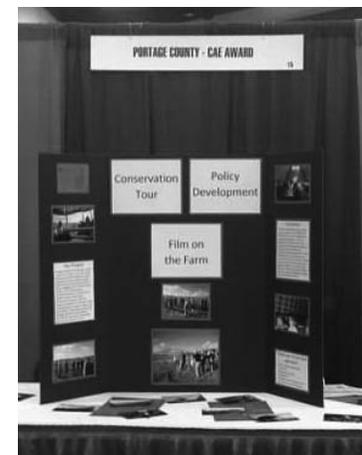
This year, the Portage County Farm Bureau was chosen to showcase one of our activities at the WFBF Annual Meeting. The county hosted a District 8 YFA conservation tour led by the Friends of Millcreek Watershed and showed the documentary *Farmland* as the film on the farm.

The county hosted Director of Governmental Relations Paul Zimmermann and Don Radtke and they presented Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and producer-led initiatives.

For having a display at the WFBF Annual Meeting, Portage County Farm Bureau received \$500. The Portage County board of directors voted to put \$250 into the Ag in the Classroom fund for the county and \$200 set aside for a scholarship.

The Portage County Farm Bureau wants to form a committee to expand the Ag in the Classroom program. This committee will chose curriculum, make contacts and give presentations to schools and work with the essay contest.

If you have input or want to serve on this committee, please contact John Eron or one of our board members.



2015 YFA Conference Wrap-Up



On December 4-6, more than 500 YFA members from across Wisconsin attended the YFA Conference. This conference is held in conjunction with the WFBF Annual Meeting and was a huge success.

YFA members took part in breakout

sessions covering everything from the Peterson Farm Brothers to how to advocate for agriculture.

YFA members also competed in state-wide contests such as Excellence in Agriculture, Achievement Award and the Discussion Meet.



YFA members from Clark, Portage, Price, Taylor, Marathon and Wood counties.



President's Message



Recently, I've accepted a call to represent a farmer's perspective of conservation leadership on a panel of people in the Wisconsin River Basin.

The panel will discuss our perspective at the Healthy Soils, Healthy Waters Workshop in February at MidState Technical College in Wisconsin Rapids.

Wisconsin Rapids.

Also, two farmers from the Millcreek Watershed and I have been invited by the staff at the Department Natural Resources to represent the state of Wisconsin's Producer Led Watershed initiatives program.

This program will be in Iowa and hosted by the Fishers and Farmers Partnership, which works to improve U.S. waters and fisheries.

This two-part leadership training is designed to engage 15 selected people across the upper Mississippi River Basin from Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

2 Meet Lauren McCann
Let's Talk Membership
Employee Management
Essay Contest

3 National Ag Day
Ag Day at the Capitol
Scholarship Offered
Board Contacts
Member Benefits

Meet District 8 Promotions and Education Committee Chair: Lauren McCann



In December, Don Radke and Ashleigh Calaway met an energetic and passionate individual - Lauren McCann.

Lauren shared how she loved educating the public about where their food comes from and how important agriculture is. Don knew that he had found the right person to fill the district vacancy.

Lauren is originally from the Fort Atkinson area. She earned a bachelor's degree in animal science from UW-River Falls and is working as a reproduction technician for North Star Cooperative/Select Sires.

Lauren is excited to build connections throughout the district as well as with area farms. Her excitement

for what Farm Bureau has to offer is contagious.

If you are interested in getting involved in the Promotion and Education Committee, please contact Lauren at lauren.l.mccann@outlook.com or 920.728.4948.

Let's Talk Membership

The key to membership work is to go after potential members who you believe will leave a impact or help the organization make a difference for agriculture. Also, share the experiences that you have been through and what impact they had on you.

– Brad Weber

Membership is important because a healthy organization needs to maintain or increase its membership numbers. The keys to membership work are showing your passion for Farm Bureau. Also being prepared with information and knowing your perspective member as much as possible.

– Randy Wokatsch

2015 marked the last year of the long-standing Producer Club luncheon at the WFBF Annual Meeting. Just like those of us in agriculture continue to make changes to move with the times so does Farm Bureau.

On October 1, we kicked-off the new and improved Farm Bureau Proud Club along with the new district-wide membership incentives.

District-wide incentives still up for grabs:

I'll Get 2!

April 1: Take the 'I'll get 2' pledge and you are entered into a drawing for a \$50 Kwik Trip card and a \$50 Fleet Farm card (total \$100 prize).

**One entry for the first two members you sign and for every additional one after that. Starting now until April 1.*

5x5

May 5: Sign five members by May 5 and receive a Farm Bureau Proud jacket, that will be presented at your county Farm Bureau annual meeting and entry into the Farm Bureau Proud Club! Plus members of the 2016 Farm Bureau Proud Club and their spouse or guest will receive exclusive recognition at the 2016 WFBF Annual Meeting. Farm Bureau Proud Club members also receive a commemorative pin and a special gift in recognition of their efforts.

I'm a Rock Star

September 30: Sign five members between now and September 30 and you are entered into a drawing for a \$250 Visa gift card. Along with your entry into the Farm Bureau Proud Club.

**One entry for the first five memberships and then one entry for each membership after.*

For more membership information or if you want to go on a membership drive, please contact District 8 Coordinator Ashleigh Calaway at 866.355.7348 or acalaway@wfbf.com.



District 8 Producer Club members included: (L-R) Brad Weber, George Blomberg, Melissa Yates, Lyle Weden, Randy Wokatsch and Don Radtke, WFBF District 8 Director.



A 'How To' on Employee Management

In today's world, farmers have to manage people to get the job done. Managing people isn't easy, not to mention the rules to follow. There are human resources-related issues such as how to overcome communication barriers and tips for recruiting, hiring and training employees.

This seminar will equip attendees with a basic understanding of human resources and provide suggestions on how as an employer you can protect your interests and workforce.

When: Wednesday, February 24, 9:45 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Where: Country Aire Banquet Hall, F1312 County Road P, Stratford

Cost: Partners for Progressive Agriculture members: \$18 Class #64910; General rate: \$22 Class #64911

Agenda

9:45 a.m. - Registration with coffee available

10:15 a.m. - Welcome and introductions by sponsors

10:30 a.m. - Practical procedures for addressing employment issues

Kevin Terry and Dean Dietrich, Ruder Ware attorneys

Working with others is not always an easy thing. In a conversational format, Dean and Kevin will talk about the tools and knowledge you need to protect yourself from employment claims. Using examples they will show you how to ensure that you are properly addressing the issues that arise when dealing with employees. At the end of this conversation you will better understand the basics of employment law so that you can manage your employees and avoid liability of missteps.

12 p.m. - Lunch

12:30 p.m. - Worker's compensation basics for the farm

Russ Wilson, Ruder Ware attorney

Worker's compensation is part of the safety net for employers in the industrial age. Farmers get a break in the manner in which 'employer' is defined and in which 'employees' are counted, but protection in the form of a worker's compensation policy is critical where there is doubt. This presentation will not only define those terms and apply them to the agriculture industry but will discuss the merits of carrying worker's compensation insurance.

1 p.m. - Panel discussion

Kevin Terry, Dean Dietrich and Sara Ackermann, Ruder Ware attorneys, Heather Schlessler, UW-Extension and area farm leaders

Have you ever wondered how you should have handled a certain situation? Could it have been handled differently? Are there any potential legal ramifications that you need to worry about? During this panel discussion you get the opportunity to ask local farm employers and lawyers how a situation should have been handled. Get your 'what if' questions answered.

For more information, questions or to register, please contact 715.675.3331 or visit goo.gl/forms/TMWaM2J9R.

Ag in the Classroom Essay Contest

Each year Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom offers an essay contest for fourth and fifth grade students in all public, private and home schools programs, including 4-H clubs, Farm Bureau families and other organizations.

The 2015-2016 topic is 'Tell us about making maple syrup in Wisconsin.' Portage County contest entries are due by **April 1**.

Essay submissions must be 100- to 300-words in length and will be judged on content, grammar, spelling and neatness.

For more information, please contact Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom program at 608.828.5644 or visit www.wisagclassroom.org.



There are Benefits to Your Farm Bureau Membership:

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 - Accidental Death Policy

For complete details visit wfbf.com/benefits-membership.

Preparing for National Agriculture Day

Celebrate National Ag Day March 15

Did you know that it can take up to 500 years to make an inch of **soil?**

Farmers use conservation practices to protect this resource.



March 15 is National Ag Day, a time when producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies and countless others across America gather to recognize and celebrate the abundance provided by American agriculture.

As the world population soars, there is even greater demand for the food, fiber and renewable resources produced in the U.S. The National Ag Day program

a daily basis and is increasingly contributing to fuel and other bio-products. Each year, members of the agricultural industry gather to promote American agriculture. This effort helps teach millions of consumers.

By far, the most effective part of this program is the role you play in helping spread the word. A few generations ago, most Americans were directly involved in—or had relatives or friends involved in—agricultural-related endeavors.

Today, that is no longer the case. That is why it is so important that we join together at the community level...our voices, in concert, become a shout that carries our message a great deal further than any one of us can do alone! We are pleased that you have joined this effort to promote American agriculture.

Download more helpful tools at www.agday.org! You'll find:

- Talking points about the importance of agriculture.
- Ag Day logos.
- Sample presentation speech.
- Press release (to download and modify for your event).
- PSAs (to download and modify for your event).
- Print advertisements.



For more information, please visit wfbf.com/programmevents/nationalagday.

believes that every American should:

- Understand how food, fiber and renewable resource products are produced.
- Value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy.
- Appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant and affordable products.
- Acknowledge and consider career opportunities in the agriculture, food, fiber and renewable resource industries.

Agriculture provides almost everything we eat, use and wear on

Portage County Farm Bureau Members Attend Ag Day at the Capitol

Ag Day at the Capitol is the largest gathering of farmers from around the state representing a variety of farm groups who wanted to learn more about state issues and meet with their state legislators.

The Rural Mutual Insurance Company and GROWMARK, Inc., are major sponsors of the event. Co-sponsors of the event with the Wisconsin Farm Bureau include a variety of other dairy, beef, pork, horse, corn, soybean, cranberry, potato and vegetable groups.



Portage County Farm Bureau Contacts:

President, John Eron 715.498.5222
 Vice President, Mark Zajackowski 715.457.2860
 Secretary/Treasurer, James Isherwood 715.344.9654
 YFA Chair, Melissa Eron 715.498.5222

Director, John Kosmalski 715.677.3857
 Director, Leroy Miller 715.677.3435
 Director, Mark Schaffner 715.370.2904
 Director, Leonard Wiza 715.457.6648
 Director, Nathan Wolosek 715.459.1820

Portage County Farm Bureau 888.385.5945
 WFBF Board Director, Don Radtke 715.573.7208
 District 8 Coordinator, Ashleigh Calaway 866.355.7348
 RMIC District Manager, Dave Meihak 715.344.6220

Portage County Farm Bureau Scholarship Applications Due

Scholarship guidelines:

1. An applicant must hold a current Portage County Farm Bureau membership or have parent or legal guardian who is a current member to receive a scholarship.
2. A student enrolled in a four-year university or two-year technical school program with a freshman, sophomore or junior standing or a high school senior accepted to four- or two-year program.
3. A total of \$250 awarded to one applicant.
4. The application must be complete, including a reference, letter of recommendation and essay in order to be eligible.
5. In case the recipient does not enroll, the scholarship may be awarded to an alternate.
6. Payment of scholarship award will be made by the Portage County Farm Bureau upon receiving first semester transcripts.
7. Preference will be given to a student pursuing a two- or four-year degree in agriculture.
8. Recipients will be notified by **May 1**.

Applications are due by **April 1**. Return completed application to:

Portage County Farm Bureau
P.O. Box 5550
Madison, WI 53705



For questions, please contact John Eron at 715.498.5222. Thank you for your cooperation.

Name _____
 Address _____
 County you reside in _____
 Date of birth _____
 School currently attending _____
 Grade point average _____
 Course of study _____
 Date of graduation _____

Also include:

- List your post-graduation intentions as well as what educational standing you have already achieved.
- List some of the experiences you have had with Farm Bureau.
- What organizations you have participated in (i.e., 4-H, FFA, Scouts, etc.)
- In five years how do you see yourself contributing to the agriculture community that you live in?
- Please share why you think Wisconsin Farm Bureau is important to agriculture.