

## **DANE COUNTY FARM BUREAU VOTING DELEGATES:**

The following people have been nominated as voting delegates for the WFBF 2011 annual meeting. We have 10 openings for voting delegates:

1.  Roger Cohee
2.  Jim Haack
3.  Ryan Haack
4.  Tom Jelinek
5.  Dennis Jesberger
6.  Alison Kepner
7.  Pat Maier
8.  Jack Meffert
9.  Lee Meinholz
10.  Pat O'Brien
11.  Chuck Ripp
12.  Rochelle Ripp
13.  Tim Sherven
14.  Aaron Tigert
15.  Bernie Weisensel

*1. Tell us about yourself and your involvement in agriculture.*

*2. Explain your interest and desire to serve as a voting delegate at the WFBF annual meeting.*

### **ROGER COHEE**

I was raised on a registered Holstein Dairy Farm in Fitchburg and graduated from the U of W Platteville with an Agriculture Degree. I had a career in Agri Business Management for 36 years working for several agriculture supply corporations and was also involved as an owner/partner of a A.O. Smith Harvestore dealership. In 2000, I retired from Universal Cooperative, Inc, an interregional ag supply coop and currently live on the my family's 150 acre farm in Fitchburg.

I am a longtime member of the Dane County Farm Bureau and have participated in Ag Day at the Capital and served on the Policy Development and Local Affairs committee. I've also assisted in farm tours and farm safety presentations. I've been very active in the city of Fitchburg chairing the Ag and Rural Affairs Committee, city re-zone committee and land use planning committee.

By representing Dane County at the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Annual Meeting I believe I can be a strong representative when discussing key Farm Bureau issues and policies. I have been a delegate to the WFBF and again would look forward to visiting with other County representatives to identify projects and issues that may also pertain to our County.

I'm respectfully asking for your vote as your Delegate to the Wisconsin Farm Bureau annual meeting in December



### **JIM HAACK**

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My wife Kathy and I, along with our son Ryan, farm about 400 acres out by Deerfield. We have about 100 dairy cows, raise about 90 steers, and custom raise some heifers along with our own.

As a delegate I find it interesting to discuss the various challenges within our industry and help decide what we want to do to solve them.

### **RYAN HAACK**

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I grew up on a family dairy farm in Deerfield, and then studied animal science at a university. I am now working with my parents on the dairy. We milk 100 cows, raise all our feed on 400 acres of land, custom raise heifers and finish out our steers. Outside of working on the farm I like to run marathons and do triathlons. This gives me a chance to meet, and provide important face to face contact, with people outside of agriculture to give them information about our industry.

I attended many young farmer events over the past half-dozen years and met many great people. I went to the annual young farmer convention a few times. I've met with representatives at the state capital a few times, as well as being part of numerous other activities. Now that I've passed into adult-hood, I'd like to continue my involvement with the farm bureau and keep learning about the issues that affect our industry. I'd also like to be part of the discussion process to help alleviate some of the problems we may face.

### **DENNIS JESBERGER**

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I am a lifelong town of Bristol farmer and farm on a farm that has been in the family since 1851. I did dairy till 2003, and now raise feeder steers to 500 lbs, dairy heifers to breeding age, and cash crop corn, soybeans, and wheat.

I am interested in helping to serve Dane county Farm Bureau members at the state annual meeting. Dane County FB Member 7 Years, Board Member 3 Years.

### **PATRICK MAIER**

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Living on a farm my whole life has created the foundation for my passion of agriculture. I work on my family's dairy operation outside of Waunakee, WI full time after graduating from University Wisconsin- Platteville in May 2010 with a degree in Ag Business. I am involved in the management of the operation where we have roughly 700 cows and 1500 acres. A day on the farm can be very diverse from working with animal to giving tours of the operation to local schools, always keeping my days eventful. Farming is the life style I enjoy, and is the lifestyle that has created who I am.

I would enjoy being a voting delegate, because I think it is very important to have producers get involve with the regulations that directly affect them. As my father once told me, "There is just as much going on outside the farm gate that will affect the operation as going on inside the farm gate." I find this to be very true with the small percentage of the country's population being in touch with production agriculture, yet the entire population making the regulatory decisions.



### **JACK MEFFERT**

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I am a semi-retired farmer; I have been on the Dane County Farm Bureau board for 31 years. I enjoy being at the convention being a delegate as it is very important part of business to have your voice heard on resolutions that affect the future of Farm Bureau.

### **LEE MEINHOLZ**

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I am currently an assistant herdsman and assistant calf manager on my family farm, Blue Star Dairy. I attended UW-Platteville for animal-science with a dairy emphasis and interned at Maddox Dairy in Riverdale, California, gaining experience in many areas of a mega-dairy. I was active in Dairy Club, and now in the Farm Bureau Young Farmers, and was a very active member of 4-H.

I have an interest in becoming more involved in agriculture in a larger way than just farming and the local community. And I feel that being a board member will help refine and expand my knowledge and desire to improve the agriculture community.

### **TOM JELINEK**

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I have been a dairy farmer for 21 years near Cambridge, WI. My wife(Rose), children-Matt, Alesia, Pavel and Roman help do the field work and chores. We milk 50-60 cows year-round, in a small parlor/free-stall set-up. I have been on the Dane County Farm Bureau Board for about 13 years and have served as President for 4 years. I also, serve on the Frontier FS Board of Directors.

The reason for serving as a delegate to the Annual Meeting is that Farm Bureau is a grassroots organization and this is a way for me to make a difference.

### **ALISON KEPNER**

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I was raised on a hog and grain farm in Northwest Illinois. Growing up I was fully engaged in agriculture by showing hogs at the local county fair and becoming involved in both 4-H and FFA. I moved to Waunakee in 2010 to work at Vita Plus Corporation in Madison as an Accounting Associate, which combined my two passions: agriculture and finance. Working in the accounting department of a grain, feed, and agronomy company I see the trials and tribulations that farmers face daily. After I relocated, I did not know many people so I sought out something familiar. Joining the Dane County Farm Bureau was a natural step and one of the best decisions I have ever made. Since joining, I have met many great people that I have learned from and hope to continue to do great things in agriculture for Dane County and Wisconsin!

I was honored to represent Dane County as a voting delegate at the 2010 WFBF Annual meeting last December. While relatively new to Farm Bureau and the board, the whole experience was very exciting! I saw the policies that were voted on at the county level be voted into Wisconsin Farm Bureau Policy. The mission of Farm Bureau is to 'lead a growing and dynamic agriculture' and I believe the only way to do that is to keep current on issues that are affecting farmers in the county and state. There is so much uneducated and negative speculation about the 'proper' ways farmers conduct business that it's important we show we have structured policy that we support. After attending the annual meeting and serving as a voting delegate I was so excited about being more educated about what Wisconsin Farm Bureau really believes in and stands for. It enforced that joining Farm Bureau was a great decision!



### **PAT O'BRIEN**

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My name is Pat O'Brien, and I am a 4th generation family dairy farmer. My wife Jean and I, along with my brother Tom and his wife Lyn, operate Stoner Prairie Dairy, located in the City of Fitchburg. We have a milking herd of 260 Holsteins, plus approximately 220 head of young stock for replacements. Four hundred acres of alfalfa and corn are raised to feed our livestock and 250 acres of soybeans, wheat and corn are raised for cash sales.

I have been a Farm Bureau member for over 30 years. I have served on the Dane County Board for ten years. At present, I am Board Vice President and also served a term as President. Additionally, I served a three year term on the WFBF Volunteers For Agriculture Committee and I am a graduate of the WFBF Institute Leadership Program. I have been a delegate to the WFBF Annual Meeting in the past. I appreciate the opportunity to meet with Staff, The State Board of Directors and other delegates from around the State. I enjoy discussing issues, and being involved in "grassroots" policy making. I would appreciate your vote to be a Delegate to The WFBF, 2011 Annual Meeting.

### **TIM SHERVEN**

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I am originally from New Glarus, WI and grew up on my family's dairy farm where we milk 45 Holstein cows and run 200 acres of corn, beans, alfalfa and wheat. In May of 2010, I completed my undergraduate studies at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville where I majored in Animal Science. During my studies at UWP, I was involved in several agriculture groups such as the Pioneer Dairy Club and Alpha Gamma Rho. Following college, I began working for Agri-Nutrition Consulting as a Ration Analyst. I work closely with our Independent Consultants that are located throughout the United States, formulating rations for livestock herds.

Being a voting delegate for the Wisconsin Farm Bureau would be a great honor to have. My strong passion for agriculture has made me dedicated to make sure that the right decisions are being made for this organization. I believe I have a good understanding what is best not only for our members, but for the WFBF as well. In the past, I have been put in leadership roles where my decisions have affected others around me. As a voting delegate I believe my responsibility is to listen to our members about their views, concerns, and their attitude about not only the events that are taking place, but where the WFBF is headed in the future.

### **CHUCK RIPP**

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I have been involved with farming my whole life. I love working with dairy cattle. I'm married to Jenny Ripp & have 3 children, Kailyn, Riley & Morgan. I'm in a partnership with two other brothers, Gary & Troy & we farm 900 acres & milk around 850 cows 3x a day. We also have 12 fulltime employees. I'm a member of Farm Bureau, PDPW, DBA & ship our milk to Grande Cheese. I'm also been a delegate for AgSource for 7 years. I would like to continue to be a delegate, because I'm pretty involved with agriculture & would like to have my views known. I feel with my dairy background, I could help discuss issues that we face in the agriculture future.

### **ROCHELLE RIPP**

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My name is Rochelle Ripp and I grew up on my family's dairy and cash crop operation just outside of Dane. I attended the University of Wisconsin-Platteville and earned a degree in Agribusiness with an emphasis in Marketing and Communications. I currently work at Filament Marketing, an agricultural marketing agency in Madison. There, I have the pleasure of working with a



variety of clients to develop strategic marketing plans, create advertisements and promotional materials, write articles to be published in industry publications, and plan events.

I also currently serve as the Ag Promotions chair on the Dane County Farm Bureau board. It is my goal to educate the public about what Farm Bureau stands for, as well as where their food comes from and help them understand the process and the people behind that effort. I have planned, coordinated, and executed several events in my first year of serving, working with various agribusinesses and educators and involving many new members. I look forward to further representing Dane County Farm Bureau.

I am interested in representing Dane County Farm Bureau as a delegate at the WFBF annual meeting because I would like to be the next generation of YFAs involved in the decisions and representation of our county and our state organization. I think it would be a great opportunity to learn more about the way Farm Bureau takes initiative to represent the thoughts and ideas of the members.

### **AARON TIGERT**

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My wife and I own a farm in Black Earth where we grow crops and raise dairy heifers. This farm has been in her family for over 100 years and so we have great incentive and pressure to keep it in production agriculture for many generations to come. I also work full-time off the farm as risk manager for Vita Plus Corporation, headquartered in Madison, WI. These experiences expose me to different aspects of agriculture every day which gives me a balanced perspective both from the producer view but also from the agri-business side.

In reviewing the current Wisconsin Farm Bureau Policy, I find it aligns almost perfectly with my personal beliefs and core values. Given this, I would feel privileged to be selected as a voting delegate for Dane County.

### **BURNIE WEISENSEL**

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I operate a cash crop farm, with my wife Sandy, in the Town of Sun Prairie. After graduating from UW-Platteville, I returned to the family farm and worked with my parents running a farrow to finish swine operation. I served on the Dane County Pork Producers Board for a number of years. After discontinuing the swine operation, I took a job off the farm, and continued cash cropping. My wife and I are now both retired from our full time jobs off the farm, and enjoy farming.

This year will complete my second year as a Dane County Farm Bureau board member. Last year was my first time as a delegate to the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. I found this experience very rewarding. It was a chance to meet and share ideas with farmers from all over the state. I would be honored to represent Dane County Farm Bureau at the State annual meeting.

