

# **Dunn County Farm Bureau**

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## Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

### AFBF's Thatcher Visits District 9



Members of the Dunn County Farm Bureau posed for a photo with American Farm Bureau Lobbyist Mary Kay Thatcher and State Representative Tom Larson.

American Farm Bureau lobbyist Mary Kay Thatcher made a stop in Baldwin on March 17 for an event honoring National Ag Day. Her 27 years in this position, plus degrees in animal science and agricultural economics from Iowa State and previous experience as the director of congressional and public affairs of the farm credit administration during the first Bush administration proved her to be an articulate and extremely knowledgeable presenter on ag policy from a Capitol Hill perspective. Some of the topics discussed included the farm bill, information on "big data", summary of what is happening on Capitol Hill and drones. Dunn County Farm Bureau was one of the sponsors of this event.

### Inspiration Found at Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit

The Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit, presented by Badgerland Financial, Wisconsin Farm Bureau and the University of Wisconsin-Extension was held in Madison, March 14-15. The purpose of the event is to connect women involved in all areas of Wisconsin's diverse agriculture community.

Summit attendees were engaged in diverse topics such as agriculture advocacy, personal finance, technology, photography and health and wellness. There was also entertainment by Comedy City, an improv comedy show.



Ladies who attended the Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit from District 9 were (front L to R) Jolene Wester, Bethany Dado, Kristin Solum, Leah Christenson, (back L to R) Geri Wolfe, Sandy Reichel, Debbie Johnson, Roxi Solum, Cindy Bourget, Katie Mattison, Melanie Peterson and Mary Prestrud.



Laura Daniels of Cobb (left) and Karyn Schauf of Barron (right) were awarded the AgVocate of the Year Award. They are pictured with Alice in Dairyland, Kristin Olson.

The keynote speaker was Chariti Gent whose presentations included, "Bold Action: Charting the Course in Choppy Waters" and "I'm Really Gonna Do It This Time: A Simple System for Turning Those Good Ideas into Action."

The 2014 AgVocate of the Year award was also presented to Laura Daniels of Cobb and Karyn Schauf of Barron. This award honors Wisconsin women who are innovative leaders and have contributed to the success of Wisconsin agriculture.



# COUNTYnews

DUNN COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION

## YFA Members Gather for Events

YFA members from across District 9 gathered on February 22 at 45<sup>th</sup> Parallel in New Richmond for a behind-the-scenes tour of the business. 45<sup>th</sup> Parallel uses high quality grain grown by a local farmer to make vodka that is entirely produced and bottled in the facility. For more information about 45<sup>th</sup> Parallel, visit [45thparallel.com](http://45thparallel.com).

YFA members from Dunn County then gathered for a night of bowling on March 22 at Broadway Bowl in Menomonie. This gave members an opportunity to network and enjoy an evening with friends. For more information about YFA events in Dunn County, contact Cindy Bourget.



Above: Members posed for a photo in the tasting room of 45<sup>th</sup> Parallel. The educational tour drew 25 people.



Left: Dunn County YFA members enjoyed an evening of bowling at Broadway Bowl in Menomonie on March 22.

## YFA Members! Mark your Calendars!

There are great opportunities for YFA members in Dunn County to participate in district and state events. Remember that these activities are available to voting members ages 18-35.

**Discussion Meet:** The District 9 YFA Discussion Meet has been set for **Thursday, August 14** at the Orchard in Baldwin. Dinner will be at 6 p.m. with the discussion starting at 7. The Discussion Meet is an activity designed to build crucial skills in young, active farmers and agriculturalists. By participating, members build basic discussion skills, develop a keen understanding of important agricultural issues and explore how groups can pool knowledge to reach consensus and solve problems. This year's topic is: **How can young farmers and ranchers work to encourage membership growth and member engagement for the county, state and national Farm Bureau organizations?**

**Achievement Award:** The ideal candidate(s) for the Achievement Award is an individual or couple involved in production agriculture with a majority of their income subject to normal production risks. Selection of the winning YFA competitor is based on his/her efforts in production agriculture and leadership achievement. Participation in this program with individual recognition and the resulting publicity will help build the organization. Applications are due **July 1, 2014**.

**Excellence in Agriculture:** The Farm Bureau Excellence in Agriculture Award Program is designed as an opportunity for YFA members, while actively contributing and growing through their involvement in Farm Bureau and agriculture, to earn recognition. Participants will be judged on their involvement in agriculture, leadership ability, involvement and participation in Farm Bureau and other organizations (i.e., civic, service and community). The ideal candidate(s) for the Excellence in Agriculture Award is an individual or couple who do not have the majority of their income subject to normal production risk. Applications are due **July 1, 2014**.

If you are a YFA member and are interested in participating in any of these activities, please contact Katie Mattison, District 9 YFA Representative, at 715.418.0975.

### Find Your Name and Win

Don't forget to look for your name in this newsletter! If you find your name you could win \$10 towards next year's membership dues. All you have to do is read your newsletter, search for your name in a box (see example below), and if you find your name, you have 30 days to contact Geri Wolfe at 715.962.3809 to let her know. Good Luck!

For Example:

Name

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 2 Institute D.C. Trip  
President's Message
- 3 Council of Presidents  
Ag in the Classroom  
Ag Day at the Capitol  
Board Contacts

## Institute Graduates Visit Washington, D.C.

Dunn County Farm Bureau members Katie Mattison and Cindy Bourget recently spent a week in Washington, D.C. as part of their capstone trip for the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Leadership Institute. The two graduated from the program during the WFBF Annual Meeting in December.

Bourget said, "The Leadership Institute experience was a great opportunity to learn and grow—both professionally and personally. The trip to Washington, D.C. was a great way to practice the skills we learned while getting to make a difference. Plus, you get to see the



While in D.C., Farm Bureau members met with legislators to discuss agricultural topics. Pictured are WFBF President Jim Holte, Dunn County Farm Bureau member Katie Mattison, Representative Ron Kind, State Board member Joe Bragger, Dunn County Farm Bureau member Cindy Bourget and State Women's Chair Nicole Adrian.

training course at a graduate level whose mission is to produce strong and effective county Farm Bureau leaders. The training

nation's capital and have a great time." Mattison added, "Participating this past year in the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Leadership Institute has been one of the best experiences of my life. It has given me the opportunity to grow personally and has provided me the skills to succeed as a leader. I look forward to utilizing what I have gained from the class in my current leadership role with the Young Farmer and Agriculturist program and into the future within Wisconsin Farm Bureau, my career and my community."

The Farm Bureau Institute is a year-long premiere leadership training course at a graduate level whose mission is to produce strong and effective county Farm Bureau leaders. The training

focuses on personal growth and development, public speaking, working effectively with all forms of media, creativity training, understanding the role and functions of WFBF and Rural Mutual Insurance Company, training on working with government at the local, state and national levels, working to bridge the generational divide among volunteers, consideration of current national and international agricultural issues and completion of a Farm Bureau Personal Development Leadership Plan.



Members who attended the Leadership Institute trip to Washington, D.C. were (L to R) Katie Mattison, Jim Holte and Cindy Bourget.

## President's Message



As I ponder what I should write for this newsletter, I am looking ahead to warm sunny days to "get moving" with all the spring activity involved in farming! This winter tested the farming community to the extreme.

The bitter cold, the record breaking snowfall and

the long winter was an opportunity to show America how the American farmer endures the weather to make sure that our animals are well cared for before our needs and wants. During this time, many farmers used their voice to share over social media the extra work involved with keeping our animals properly cared for and the equipment working. The average consumer does not realize how the food they find in the store or farmer's market is produced, how long it takes to mature or what is involved with getting it on the store shelf! That is why we need to continue to "advocate" for farming. Each of us, at any given time, may be asked a question or hear a comment that we know is totally wrong. That is opportunity knocking! Respond to them because you are the expert and people appreciate the chance to talk with a farmer. Don't be afraid to speak up and tell them the truth about farming or their food.

During those long winter months your county Farm Bureau neighbors were busy planning and working on several activities. Included in this newsletter are photos and articles about some of our members' various participation in county and WFBF programs. If you have a chance to visit with any of these members, ask them to share their experiences and thoughts on their activities. Also, ask them how Farm Bureau has personally benefited them or their business.

The DCFB has stepped up on programs that are important to our farmers and communities. When each of you became a member of Farm Bureau, you heard this organization say that it is the "Voice for Farmers". That is what your county, state and the American Farm Bureau Federation have been doing with your membership dollars! The DCFB has farmer members working with the Dunn County Soil and Water Conservation Department on issues to protect the farmers' rights

on legislation and guidelines on soil erosion, manure management, water and soil pollution, high capacity wells and also the Red Cedar Watershed. If you have a school, 4-H club, senior citizen center, church or any other group interested in seeing a hands-on demonstration on where the pollution comes from that fills Lake Menomin and Lake Tainter, please contact me! Farmers are still being blamed as the biggest cause of the green lakes and we want to share with them accurate information.

You may have just started to hear the words "big data" used by farmers, farm organizations and agribusinesses. This was a topic that our speaker, Mary Kay Thatcher, Senior Director of Congressional Relations with the AFBF spoke about at our Farm City Day in Baldwin in March. With new technologies always coming out to be utilized by agribusiness, some privacy issues are first thought after the fact. Once in a while you may have a "weed" that may prove harmful to our agricultural business. The term comes from the use of computerized sensors on the combines, tractors and other farm equipment to gather information such as fertilization rates, soil conditions, seed rates, yield, etc. on your farm. This information will help farmers be more efficient and profitable in producing crops on their land. Unfortunately, just like any computer, there is the risk of the information collected being "hacked" and shared with corporations and government agencies for their own use. They assure us that the information will be protected but that may not be possible with new computer technologies constantly being developed.

Another issue of concern to keep in mind is the use of drones to monitor farms. There is still a lot of thoughts and discussions taking place on this privacy issue also. AFBF is already working on these issues to help protect our farm businesses with our legislators in Washington.

A major topic in Wisconsin has been the size and weight of farm implements and the use of the highways to move from farm to field and back home. The WFBF Government Relations division has been working closely with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), equipment manufacturers, law enforcement, UW-Madison Extension, other farm organizations and Wisconsin Legislators to make recommendations for legislative changes. These

changes include provisions with width, lighting, weight, length, height and permitting issues. At this writing the bills have passed the Senate and Assembly. The DCFB along with the Dunn County Extension hosted a town hall meeting for farmers on April 28. Paul Zimmerman, WFBF Executive Director of Governmental Relations, and Cheryl Skjolaas, UW Extension Youth Agriculture Safety Specialist, presented the regulations and answered questions. That evening we presented to the town boards, county board members, state patrol, county sheriff's department, implement dealers and the Dunn County Highway Dept. By having these meetings all parties involved will have a better understanding of the regulations of Implements of Husbandry (IOH) and our members will have a cropping season free from highway issues.

The Dunn County Farm Bureau will again be having our ONLY fundraiser, the county fair food stand. We will be looking for more volunteers to spend a couple of hours helping out this major undertaking. With the construction that will be taking place to the hockey rink, we were concerned that we would have to find another place to have our food stand. We have been assured for now that the shelter we use will be available this year. Otherwise, we will have to get creative in finding various ways to raise money to run our programs. If you are willing to help out for a few hours with friendly Farm Bureau members, please give us a call!

Our District Coordinator, Wendy Kannel has taken the position of Ag in the Classroom Coordinator and Foundation Director with the Wisconsin Farm Bureau. Wendy has done a wonderful job keeping the Dunn County Farm Bureau on track and moving forward as a growing and successful organization representing farmers and agriculturist throughout the county. I know I speak for all of us when I say, thank you Wendy from the bottom of our hearts for your dedication to agriculture, Farm Bureau and the members of DCFB and the time, talents and friendship you shared with us. We wish you only the best in your new position with WFBF and look forward to the awesome things you will do for all the members of Wisconsin Farm Bureau!

**Geri Wolfe**  
Dunn County Farm Bureau President

Mike Solberg

## Leaders Attend Council of Presidents



Farm Bureau leaders who attended Council of Presidents from District 9 were (front L to R): Paul Hetke (Rusk County), Karyn Schauf (Barron County), Geri Wolfe (Dunn County), Mary Prestrud (Dunn County), Dave Kruschke (St. Croix County), (back L to R) District 9 Coordinator Wendy Kannel, Mike Robers (Sawyer County), Jim Melin (Polk County), Cindy Meng (Rusk County), Jim Meng (Rusk County) and Marv Prestrud (Dunn County).

Farm Bureau leaders from around Wisconsin gathered in Madison for the annual Council of Presidents. Attending from Dunn County were Geri Wolfe and Marv and Mary Prestrud.

During the two day event, leaders heard Bruce Jones speak about the status of Wisconsin agriculture, WFBF CAO Steve Freese highlighted the strategic planning process and Peter Pelizza gave an update on Rural Mutual Insurance Company. County Farm Bureau's shared their program success stories as part of the County Activities of Excellence program and the meeting concluded with Pam Jahnke, the Fabulous Farm Babe, encouraging everyone to tell their story, share what happens on their farms and community and educate those who are not familiar with where their food comes from.

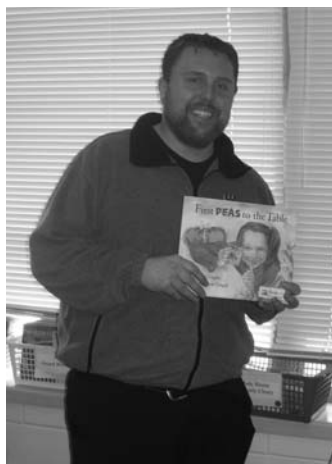
## Ag in the Classroom Activities Held

Dunn County Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom volunteer Kay Gilbertson was busy this spring visiting classrooms in Elk Mound. While there, she spoke about the day-to-day operations of her dairy farm located outside of Elk Mound and answered student questions.

Dunn County Farm Bureau also donated the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Book of the Year, *First Peas to the Table* to school libraries throughout the county.

*First Peas to the Table* by Susan Grigsby is the story of Maya who is excited

when her teacher announces they will plant a school garden like Thomas Jefferson's garden at Monticello- and they'll have a "First Peas to the Table" contest, just like Jefferson and his neighbors had each spring. Maya plants her pea seeds with a secret head start found in Jefferson's Garden Book and keeps careful notes in her garden journal. Her friend, Shakayta, however, has plans of her own for the contest. Grigsby's light-hearted classroom story also presents scientific and historical information.



Far left: Mr. Jordan Kongshaug will share the book *First Peas to the Table* with his fourth grade students in Elk Mound.



Left: Fifth grade teacher Ms. Thompson showed the books *Seed Soil Sun* and *First Peas to the Table* which were donated by the Dunn County Farm Bureau.

## Ag Day at the Capitol Held January 29

Nearly 400 members of various farm and commodity groups attended Ag Day at the Capitol on Wednesday, January 29 at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in downtown Madison.

It was there they heard from Governor Scott Walker who spoke about the importance of agriculture to Wisconsin stating that farming is a way of life and highlighted the opportunities available for young people throughout our community. Members also heard from the WFBF Government Relations team of Paul

Zimmerman and Karen Gefvert who briefed everyone about topics including implements of husbandry, animal welfare, raw milk and more.

Following a briefing session at the Monona Terrace, members walked up to the Capitol to meet with local representatives to speak about issues important to the agriculture community.

Cosponsors of the event with the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation are: National Farmers Organization, Wisconsin Cattle-

men's Association, Wisconsin Pork Association, Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association, Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association, Wisconsin Soybean Association, Dairy Business Association, Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Horse Council, Wisconsin Women for Agriculture, Wisconsin Veal Growers Association and The Country Today newspaper. The Rural Mutual Insurance Company and GROWMARK Inc. are also major sponsors of the event.

David Dummer



Dunn County Farm Bureau members met with Senator Sheila Harsdorf and Representative John Murtha during Ag Day at the Capitol. The topic of discussion was implements of husbandry.



Governor Scott Walker addressed farmers and agriculturists during Ag Day at the Capitol.



Members of the Dunn County Farm Bureau who attended Ag Day at the Capitol were (L to R) Geri Wolfe, Carl Casper, Mary Prestrud, Jim Holte, Larry Schlough, Marv Prestrud and Scott Anderson. Not pictured are Brian Douglas and Katie Mattison.

## Dunn County Farm Bureau Contacts:

President, Geri Wolfe 715.962.3809  
Vice President, Marv Prestrud 715.418.1990  
Secretary/Treasurer, Darryl Kovacik 715.643.5433  
YFA Chair, Cindy Bourget 715.505.7676

Director, Carl Casper 715.235.3323  
Director, Brian Douglas 715.308.2249  
Director, Kevin Gilbertson 715.879.5472  
Director, Loren Hanson 715.879.5337  
Director, Tim Jackson 715.308.6295  
Director, John Kovacik 715.643.5433  
Director, David Schaefer 715.235.1185  
Director, Larry Schlough 715.235.5600  
Director, Jesse Singerhouse 715.664.8295

Dunn County Farm Bureau 877.457.8897  
WFBF Board Director, Jim Holte 715.835.6708  
District 9 YFA Chair, Katie Mattison 715.418.0975  
District 9 Women's Chair, Mary Prestrud 715.418.1991  
District 9 Coordinator, Wendy Kannel 866.355.7349  
RMIC District Manager, Ken Truax 715.514.4477