



Oconto County Farm Bureau

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FROM THE **# 1 FARM INSURER**
IN WISCONSIN, WE WOULD LIKE TO SAY
THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND LOYALTY!




Rural Mutual Agent in OcontoCo:

Casey Boye (920) 835-2161	Melvin Gross (920) 855-6960
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Chuck McDaniel, District Manager - (920) 572-9122

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

Leadership Boot Camp Series Recap By Katelin Steege



Rob Richards (standing) led the policy development panel at the Promotion and Education Leadership Boot Camp.

The WFBF Promotion and Education Committee hosted the first Leadership Boot Camp Series on November 11 at Heartland Farms in Hancock. The boot camp focused on the very timely topic of policy development. District 7 was well represented with five members present from three different counties.

Steve Boe, WFBF Director of Local Affairs, led the morning program of 'Having an Influence, Making an Impact,' which focused on how to convey your message to elected officials and their staffers.

In the afternoon, Rob Richard, WFBF Senior Director of Governmental Relations, walked everyone through the resolution process from inception at a county meeting to being adopted as policy. A panel of Farm Bureau leaders including Brian Preder from Waupaca County shared their experiences with crafting resolutions and the policy development process at the county and state level. The Promotion and Education Committee plans to continue the Leadership Boot Camp Series and move the location around the state. Some other potential topics are social media training and public speaking.



Farm Succession Planning Workshop Held

On November 8, the Oconto County and Marinette County Farm Bureaus and Rural Mutual Insurance agents Casey Boye and Jim Pickett hosted a farm succession planning workshop at Romy's Holiday Inn in Kelly Lake.

The 21 members in attendance heard from estate attorney Richard Bollenbeck, financial advisor David McNurlen and Oconto UW-Extension agent Sarah Mills-Lloyd about how to successfully transfer farms to the next generation.

If you weren't able to attend but want information on the subject, please contact Casey Boye at 920.835.2161 or cboye@ruralins.com or Jim Pickett at 715.927.2122 or jpickett@ruralins.com.



Oconto UW-Extension agent Sarah Mills-Lloyd offered suggestions for how to initiate the planning necessary to successfully transfer the farm to the next generation.



Attorney Richard Bollenbeck explained what to be aware of when doing estate planning.



David McNurlen, Regional Financial Consultant with Farm Bureau Financial Services, gave examples of ways to transfer an estate equitably while preserving the family farm.



COUNTYnews

OCONTO COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION



The 2017 YFA Conference Was Remarkable

By Walter Taylor, YFA Chair



Walter Taylor chatted with Farm Reporter Pam Jahnke at the YFA Conference.

Trying something new is what my grandparents and parents always instilled in my adventures towards learning and advocacy. Seeing all of my high school and collegiate friends posting pictures and sharing of the seminars on social media during the past few years of the YFA Conference prompted me to seek further understanding of what YFA really was and what it does for people my age. So ... what truly was this YFA Conference?

First and foremost, it is a 'grassroots' gathering of amazing young farmers and agriculturists from around the great state of Wisconsin, 522 people to be exact; with this year's theme being – 'Farm Bureau, Rooted in Family.'

Meeting new people is always a challenge, I witness it with my students every day, but, what if those new people were just like you, shared the same core values, worked the careers you work, experience the triumphs and setbacks you feel, and believe in the progressive ideas you believe in? That's what family really is and next year

YFA Meeting Planned

By Walter Taylor, YFA Chair

As your local county YFA chair, I want to gather inspired individuals to develop a program of activities that brings together the younger generation in the agricultural industry of Oconto County.

Our first committee meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Saturday, March 10,

at the S&S Hometown Bar and Restaurant in Oconto Falls.

Your first refreshment will be on me along with some tasty appetizers. If you find this intriguing or know of someone who wants to join the cause, please contact me at 920.980.7865 (call or text).



Walter Taylor renewed an old acquaintance at the YFA Conference.

you really need to join me at the YFA Conference.

I thoroughly enjoyed the surprise reunions with people I have not seen in quite some time, talked about agriculture issues in small group meetings, met other local farmers and agriculturalists from our neighboring counties, gathered ideas to advocate for agricultural education in our schools and communities, networked with businesses and organizations during the trade show, learned about hemp farming, learned about farm succession planning, learned how to turn ideas into action, how to advocate with local politicians, and heard stories of wisdom from Michele Payn and Chris Koch ... Google or YouTube them.

This action-packed weekend is great for you and your family! Many of my friends brought their little farm-hands and enjoyed the amenities of the Kalahari Resorts. Never stop learning and never stop advocating for the industry we love, cherish and make our living in everyday.

Ag in the Classroom Report

By Kayla Zahn

Oconto County Ag in the Classroom is excited once again to announce the essay contest topic and book of the year.



This year's topic is, 'Inventions that have made agriculture great.' The book of the year is, "John Deere, That's Who!" I can't wait to read about the many inventions the kids research this year.

If you're a fourth or fifth grade teacher, or you know of a

teacher that wants to have their class participate in the essay contest, please contact me at Kayla.steffel10@gmail.com or 920.373.0261.

Home school groups, 4-H clubs, fourth and fifth grade individuals, etc., are welcome to participate as well.

For contest rules, visit www.wisagclassroom.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2017-2018-Essay-Contest-Information-Sheet.pdf.

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President's Report



It's mid-winter and, unfortunately another odd one where Georgia is getting more snow than northern Wisconsin. The extreme variability has led to one of the worst flu seasons in recent history. I'm a week into a cold and can't hardly talk.

The only saving grace is the abundance of seed catalogues that have come in the mail. I can imagine my gardens for summer while I am sneezing and wheezing. This year I might be able to keep ahead of the weeds as I will be retired from my job at Genex.

It is amazing the changes in the dairy industry since I started with Genex 21 years ago. In 1995, there were only two farms of 1,000 cows in Wisconsin. Today 3,000 to 5,000 cow herds are not uncommon.

In 1995, 70 pounds of milk per cow per day was good production. Now, 100 plus pounds of milk per cow, per day is possible. Today, most people who handle cows speak Spanish. That's a long way from the red stanchion barn, couple of cement silos and 30 to 80 cows of the very recent past.

Part of my job was mating cows and most of them had names and dairymen could give me details on each in the milkhouse. Now, with the thousands of cows on a farm, they have a tendency to be only numbers on a list. These changes have been

hard on an old registered Holstein guy. Time marches on. 2018 will be a challenging year, especially for the dairy industry. Production was down in 2017 for the first time in several years. Actually, this is good news.

From what I hear processors are putting pressure on those who want to expand and, therefore, add to existing over production. Lowering over-all production while increasing efficiency is the way out of these problems and would add to profits when prices recover. Just take heart in the fact that people need to eat and the population always seems to be increasing. Have a great 2018.

Dennis Jahnke
Oconto County Farm Bureau President

Council of Presidents and Ag Day at the Capitol Highlights

By David Lee Schneider



Lourdes and Dave Schneider (left) participated in the Council of Presidents in Madison.

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau held the annual Council of the Presidents on January 23-24 at the Sheraton Hotel in Madison.

I attended the meeting to ensure the Wisconsin Farm Bureau members from Oconto County have a voice in the State of Wisconsin Farm Bureau and at the Ag Day at the Capitol event.

My wife, Lourdes accompanied me with a goal of keeping me in line, and to be a voice from her perspective points of a loving wife and mother, an agricultural worker in the cheese industry, a minority immigrant from Mexico, and the heart of our farm! So many times, Lourdes sees things that I do not see and vice versa. We make a great team.

At the meeting, representatives from many counties discussed diverse topics that are so important for Oconto County farmers and ranchers. Some of the topics included; the results from a voting member survey, possible newsletter changes, member benefits, local affairs updates, county ordinances, Rural Mutual Insurance update and county Farm Bureau by-laws and governance. The keynote speaker was our new Secretary of Agriculture Sheila Harsdorf. With Secretary Harsdorf, I personally discussed the challenges and changes of agricultural markets and the prices facing myself and other farmers and ranchers for 2018.

Upon completion of the Council of the Presidents, we attended Ag Day at the Capitol at Monona Terrace Community and Convention



Lourdes and Dave Schneider with Secretary of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Sheila Harsdorf.

Center where Governor Scott Walker was the keynote speaker. The Governor was introduced as a friend of the farmers by WFB President Jim Holte.

The Governor spoke about his own farm experiences and how he supports our agricultural industry in Wisconsin. From the Monona Terrace, Lourdes and I walked to the Capitol and met with Senator Dave Hansen's (D-Green Bay) and Representative John Nygren's (R-Marinette) staff.

I ensured that our legislators are very well informed about the agricultural issues that concern Farm Bureau members from Oconto County.

This is one of the most important things that I can do for you, as your vice president of the Oconto County Farm Bureau.

If you want more details on what I discussed, please contact me at 920.321.6701 or davidleeschneider@yahoo.com.



Dave and Lourdes Schneider discussed ag issues with John Wagnitz from Senator Dave Hansen's (D-Green Bay) agricultural staff.

District 7 Director's Report



The annual meeting went very well. It was great to see the quality of contestants from District 7 in Excellences of Ag and Discussion Meet.

The silent auction went over well and thank you everyone who donated and bid on items. The leaders challenge fundraiser is being supported very well. It was great seeing a quality group of people graduate the WFBF Leadership Institute and to hear the names of the new class this year. I'm looking forward to meeting all of you and watching you grow with Farm Bureau.

As January came to a end it was a busy month. I got to hear President Trump address the members of AFBF in Nashville Tennessee. He signed executive orders promoting rural broadband internet and rural development, and spoke on trade, the farm bill and immigration. I am feeling positive that we can get

some work done with this administration.

As the month continued, we had great turnout for Council of Presidents. Lots of good conversation in closed session. Ag Day at the Capitol had good turnout with Governor Scott Walker addressing the WFBF membership. With poor commodity prices members had lots of concerns for legislators. From hemp, high capacity wells, CAFOs and more, it was on the table for discussion this year. But there were a lot of thanks for the work they got done this past year.

Looking forward to IGNITE Conference that will be held in Stevens Point on April 5-6. Please take advantage of this great opportunity for self-improvement.

I hope that the progress on industrial hemp keeps moving forward swiftly. This will bring another viable industry to Wisconsin and give farmers another cash crop.

Adam Kuczer
WFBF District 7 Board of Director

District 7 YFA Report



District 7 YFA members teamed up for a game of 'Google Feud' as an ice breaker at the District Meeting the first night of the YFA Conference.

Hello District 7 YFA members,

What better way to end another great year than at the Kalahari Resorts for the annual YFA Conference. This year, we had 522 members from around the state attend the YFA Conference. Members had the chance to win it big at casino night and helped raise an astounding \$1,111 for the WFB Foundation through the 50/50 Raffle. That means one lucky YFA member also won \$1,111.

Members got to hear the story of Chris Koch, a man born with no legs or arms who learned how to farm.

District 7 YFA was well represented in the contests. Congratulations to Kelly Oudenhoven and Kristi Fiedler for being selected as finalists for the Excellence in Ag. Brian Feidler, Kyle Much and Jake Hoewisch did a great job representing District 7 in the Discussion Meet.

By the time you receive this newsletter, the annual District YFA event at the Green Bay Gamblers hockey game will have taken place. We were joined by District 6 on February 24 for a night of hockey and the chance to make new friends and meeting other YFA members from around northeast Wisconsin. I hope you were able to attend.

Brian Preder
District 7 YFA Representative

WFBF Annual Meeting Highlights By Ken Harter



District 7 delegates met prior to the full delegate session to discuss issues specific to the counties in the district.

The WFBF Annual Meeting marks the culmination of one program year and beginning of the next. It is a time for recapping the year by recognizing and celebrating the accomplishments of the organization and its members, being inspired by stimulating keynote presentations, gaining useful knowledge at stimulating workshops and learning labs and of course, having fun meeting friends, enjoying good food and entertainment.

The WFBF Annual Meeting also marks the beginning of the upcoming year as organizational leadership is elected and the policy issues that began at county Farm Bureaus around the state are debated and adopted as Farm Bureau policy to guide our governmental relations professionals in their work for us with the legislature and governor.

Dave Schneider and I represented Oconto County Farm Bureau as delegates to the 98th WFBF Annual Meeting that was held on December 1-4, at the Kalahari Resorts in Wisconsin Dells. In addition to taking in the speakers, workshops, receptions, trade show and YFA competitions, we participated in the District 7 caucus led by our District 7 Director Adam Kuczer. We reviewed the resolutions to be considered and coordinated plans for district events.

We also represented you at the WFBF Annual Meeting that concluded with discussion and voting on the proposals for addition, deletion or amendments to Farm Bureau policy. The theme of the 2017 conference was, 'Farm Bureau, Rooted in Family' and as President Jim Holte noted in his welcome, that was appropriate as the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Annual Meeting is like a big family reunion.

In my experience that is an apt description as the gathering included families and others with a common interest in farming and agriculture from around the state. I encourage you to consider experiencing the WFBF Annual Meeting.

Membership By David Lee Schneider

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau is a grassroots organization and only exists because of the valuable members, especially you. There are many similarities between a grass pasture and our Wisconsin Farm Bureau. Grass thrives and depends upon the root system. The stronger the root system the taller the grass. Grass is also dependent upon many things, including soil, precipitation, sunlight, darkness and the temperature. Grass is faced with many challenges from insects, to weeds, to droughts, to flooding, to temperature extremes and yes even overgrazing or harvesting.

Grass is also very much in need of nutrients to grow strong and become healthy. Grass enjoys fertilizers and lime, too. Grazing animals provide an excellent source of nutrients by spreading manure around naturally, or the nutrients can be applied by mechanical means with a manure spreader. Grass grows stronger with these applied nutrients and from many other grass plants all joining together to form a strong root system in a big open field, pasture, or a prairie.

Dairy and beef cattlemen are actually grass farmers first, then cattlemen. Many farmers that graze or harvest different types of grass with different species of animals are also dependent on good fences and agriculturally minded legislation. This totally makes sense that the Wisconsin Farm Bureau is a grassroots federation dependent on the members and the total membership numbers as a group. You, as a farmer or rancher, need grass to thrive, and the Wisconsin Farm Bureau needs you as a member to thrive.

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau is in need of nutrients too. These nutrients come from you as a member through your annual membership fee and your contribution of time and talents as a volunteer on different projects. Spreading our membership throughout the state makes us a very strong federation.

Grass thrives better as a group, all together ... Farm Bureau thrives better as a group ... all together. Renew your annual membership, and tell your neighbors to join, too. If you wish to renew your membership or sign up your neighbor, or volunteer on a project, or if you want to discuss agriculture, please contact me at davidleeschneider@yahoo.com or 920.321.6701.

Thank you for being a member of Wisconsin Farm Bureau.

To the right is a membership application for Wisconsin Farm Bureau. The dues in Oconto County are \$50 per membership.

Below are a couple of quick hints for you as you go through the membership application.

1. Can my spouse and I share a membership? Yes! Each membership is one vote for the county Farm Bureau. If you and your spouse feel you can have a shared opinion on county happenings, then you can have a shared membership. If you'd rather have two votes, you would each have to buy a membership.
2. Why do you need my date of birth? Your birthday is used for the accidental death benefit that comes along with your county Farm Bureau membership. It also helps us target our Young Farmer and Agriculturalist members so that we can be sure to include them in activities that are specific to them. We won't sell it to anyone, it just helps us.
3. What is the Ag Newswire? The Ag Newswire is produced by Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation each Friday and it is a summary of agriculture news for the past week.
4. How do I know what my membership type is? A voting member is someone engaged in agricultural purposes, actively engaged in the business of producing agricultural products, owners of property where such business is conducted, or providing services to agriculture. An associate member is other persons, partnerships, unincorporated associations and corporations interested in the philosophy and objectives of this association. They can be a member and participate in the member benefits, but without the right to vote or serve as a director. Typically, associate members are those without direct ties to agriculture, but carry a Rural Mutual Insurance policy.
5. Who is the membership worker? At Farm Bureau, we like to reward those who help us grow our membership. So, if you are giving this membership newsletter to someone in hopes that they will also join, please write your name in the membership worker blank. We will send you \$20 for each new member that you sign up. It's a great way to be rewarded for taking time out of your day to make the visits and help us grow our membership.
6. Where do I mail my application? You can put in the mail to WFBF, P.O. Box 5550, Madison, WI 53705 or you can drop it off at a board member's home.
7. When should I send in my payment, when is it due? Your membership starts on the day we receive your membership application and that will remain your renewal date. So, if you know that your cash is a little tight in the summer, but you could manage the renewal in September, send it in September. We'd be glad to have your membership anytime.

Oconto County Farm Bureau Contacts:

President, Dennis Jahnke	920.834.4707
Vice President, Dave Schneider	920.321.6701
Secretary/Treasurer, Maryann Monette	920.826.7703
Promotion and Education Chair, Kayla Zahn	920.373.0261
YFA Chair, Walter Taylor	920.980.7865
Director, Gordon Aprill	920.846.2465
Director, Russel Brock	920.842.2257
Director, Ken Harter	920.846.2046
Oconto County Farm Bureau	888.377.0295
WFBF Board Director, Adam Kuczer	920.822.2772
WFBF Promotion and Education Chair Katelin Steege	715.210.5384
WFBF YFA Chair, Brian Preder	920.851.5776
District 7 Coordinator, Wes Raddatz	866.355.7346
RMI District Manager, Chuck McDaniel	715.258.8830

Growing Farm Bureau ... Fill Out the Membership Form Today!

Welcome to the Farm Bureau Family

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Spouse's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Would you like to receive WFBF's weekly email newsletter, Ag Newswire? Yes

Would you like a Rural Mutual Insurance agent to contact you? Yes

Membership Type: Associate Voting

County of Membership: _____

Membership Worker: _____

Make checks payable to
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation



A Voice for Farmers.
A Vision for Agriculture.®