



Portage County Farm Bureau

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For more information about the farm dividend program and how you may qualify, contact your local Rural Mutual agent.



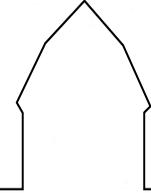
www.ruralmutual.com/farm-dividend

RURAL MUTUAL AGENTS IN PORTAGE COUNTY

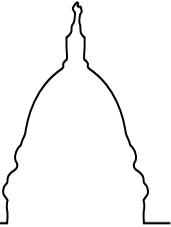
Jenni Zinda-Mancl (715) 341-5808
Lauren McCann (715) 544-1611

Dave Meihak, District Manager - (715) 544-6824

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation



The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation invites you to attend AG DAY AT THE CAPITOL



Each year the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, along with sponsors, host Ag Day at the Capitol.

It's important to raise your voice on issues that affect the agriculture community; mark your calendars and plan to attend Ag Day at the Capitol on **Wednesday, January 24**, at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in Madison.

Wisconsin is America's Dairyland and we want to tell our legislators how important agriculture is in Wisconsin and Wood County. Farmers are working to do more with less; we have new record production levels and yields per acre in our fields.

Registration begins at 11 a.m., opening program at 11:30 a.m.

followed by lunch and legislative briefings. When speaking with your legislators, share your personal stories and thank them for their support of agriculture.

Be proud to be a part of the agriculture industry and sign-up to participate in Ag Day at the Capitol.

If you are interested in attending, RSVP by **January 18** to District 8 Coordinator Ashleigh Calaway at 715.781.2306 (call or text) or acalaway@wfbf.com, please make sure to include your name and county in your message.



WFBF Seeks Rural Route Photos

Wisconsin Farm Bureau members live and work in some of the most beautiful places. In Rural Route, WFBF wants to highlight those sights.

Please email your photos (high resolution jpgs, 4x6 inches at 300 dpi) to lsiekmann@wfbf.com.



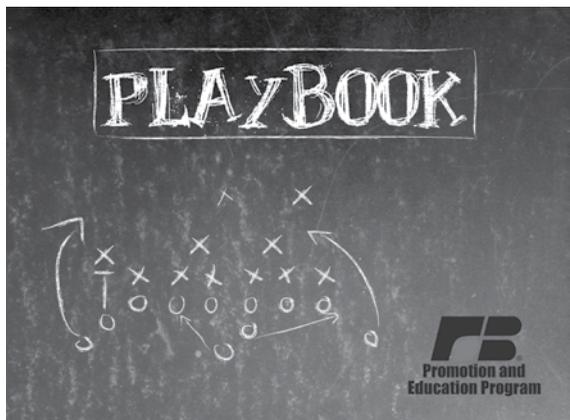
Playbook Available Online

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Promotion and Education Committee has been busy collecting plays that happen at the local level. They compiled the plays and put them together in a 'Playbook.'

The purpose of the 'Playbook' is to provide counties with ideas and resources for planning county activities and events. Throughout the 'Playbook,' you will find activities and events for all ages, timeframes and budgets.

Updates to the 'Playbook' will be made quarterly. If you have events that you want included in the next update, submit a play submission sheet.

To check out the 'Playbook,' visit wfbf.com/programsevents/promotion-and-education/playbook.





COUNTYnews

PORTAGE COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION



WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference

The 98th WFBF Annual Meeting was held December 2-4 at the Kalahari Resorts in Wisconsin Dells. The WFBF Annual Meeting overlaps with the YFA Conference, giving members young and old a chance to network.

Members are offered an opportunity to attend workshops, keynote speakers, awards banquets and the delegate session.

All farm bureau members had a great time visiting, reconnecting and networking with friends. Mark your calendars for the 2018 WFBF Annual Meeting: **December 1-3.**

YFA Conference attendees listened to Michele Payn, president and owner of Cause Matters Corp. Michele has worked with farmers

in 25 different countries and helped raise more than \$5 million in sponsorships for the National FFA Foundation. She also founded the weekly online twitter conversations of AgChat and Food Chat.

Payn also is the author of two books, “No More Food Fights!” and “Food Truths from Farm to Table.”

Both YFA and WFBF Annual Meeting attendees listened to Chris Koch, who shared his motivational story of not letting limitations or obstacles stand in his way of living life to the fullest. To learn more about Chris’s story check him out on Facebook.

Members also were participated in a trivia contest, cornhole tournament, as well as attended various breakout sessions.



Serving as Portage County delegates at the 98th WFBF Annual Meeting were: John (Melissa) Eron, president; John Herman, director; Mark (Tiffany) Schaffner, director; and Dick (Irene) Roth, member).



This year, Portage County had six YFA members who attended the YFA Conference held December 1-2 including: Kenzie Glodowski, Adam Gruna, Melissa Eron, Tiffany and Mark Schaffner and John Herman.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 2 John Deere That’s Who!
Membership Dues
Spreading Christmas Cheer
- 3 Membership Focus
Share Your Story
IGNITE Conference
Member Benefits
Board Contacts

Farm Technology Days Provides Opportunities to Get Involved

Having Wisconsin Farm Technology Days close to home is not just an exciting opportunity for locals to visit the show, but it’s also a great way to get involved with a tradition that days back to 1954.

Organizers of the 2018 show, being held at D&B Sternweis Farms and Weber’s Farm Store/Heiman Holsteins near Marshfield in Wood County, are in the process of signing up volunteers for the three-day event, slated for **July 10-12.** Volunteer Coordinator Amber Cordes says more than 1,500 volunteers are needed to make the event a success. They will help in various capacities including parking cars, serving food and taking tickets at the gate.

“This event is an amazing opportunity to not only showcase the latest in agriculture, but also Wood County and Central Wisconsin’s agricultural diversity. Please consider volunteering before, during, or after the event as a great way to get involved, make new connections, and have fun!”

Nearly 40,000 visitors from across the state and throughout the nation are expected to attend the Wood County show, which will be held in an 80-acre farm field that will be full of tents, farm equipment displays and knowledgeable experts that can answer questions

related to the agricultural industry.

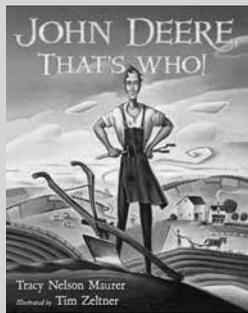
Farm Tech Days will include more than 600 commercial exhibits and an area known as ‘Innovation Square,’ which will include a miniature cranberry marsh and other cutting-edge technology newly available to the market.

The Marshfield Clinic is also offering free skin cancer screenings at the event. And kids are encouraged to visit the Future Generations Tent formerly the Youth Tent to learn more about agricultural careers or try operating a virtual tractor.

New to show will be Virtual Tours of the Sternweis and Heiman dairy farms, Weber’s Farm Store and Nasonville Dairy. This will allow the public to see what goes on behind the scenes at each of those facilities. Wisconsin Farm Technology Days is the only event of its kind that moves from county to county each year and is completely run by local volunteers.

To learn more about the show, visit www.wifarmtechnologydays.com or www.facebook.com/FTD2018.

John Deere, That's Who



This year's ag in the classroom book of the year, "John Deere, That's Who!," written by Tracy Nelson Maurer and illustrated by Tim Zeltner, provides students with inspiration for this year's ag in the classroom essay contest.

Read the book to find the answers to these questions (answers can be found in the last paragraph).

America's breadbasket means:

- The different types of bread made in the Midwest
- The types of containers a baker uses
- The wheat that is grown to make bread
- The area known as the "prairie fields of grain"

Forge means:

- A mountain
- The workplace of a blacksmith
- Fireplace
- Where a blacksmith heats the metal

Using the book of the year, "John Deere, That's Who!," this year's essay topic is 'Inventions that have made agriculture great.' Students will write about inventions that have made agriculture advance in technology, efficiency and productivity.

The essay contest is open to fourth and fifth grade students in public schools, private schools and home school programs. Students involved in 4-H, PALS and after school programs are also encouraged to participate. The essay must be between 100- and 300-words in length.

The essays must be postmarked by **April 1** and sent to the Portage County Farm Bureau Promotion and Education chair.

Melissa Eron
3471 County Road C
Stevens Point, WI 54481-9521

Visit the Wisconsin ag in the classroom website for more information www.wisagclassroom.org.

In the book "John Deere, That's Who!," the Deere family decided to move to Moline, Illinois, so the company was closer to the Mississippi River for better waterpower and easier deliveries. The 'prairie fields of grain' became known as America's breadbasket. John was a young blacksmith originally from Vermont where his forge burned to the ground and he rebuilt it before moving to Illinois. A forge is the workplace of a blacksmith. It also means fireplace, or hearth, where the blacksmith heats the metal.

Happy writing to the fourth and fifth grade students in Portage County.

Membership Dues Increasing October 1



The Portage County Farm Bureau dues will be \$55 effective **October 1**. Anyone whose membership dues are due on that date will receive an invoice in mid-August reflecting the increase in dues. The additional \$5 will go to the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, as they are increasing the dues at that time.

When you join Farm Bureau, you not only become a member of Portage County Farm Bureau, but also the Wisconsin Farm Bureau and the American Farm Bureau.

Currently your cost to be a Farm Bureau member is \$50. That is broken down as follows:

- **Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation = \$36.** This includes state activities, conducting programs and staffing, Consumer and youth education, issue advocacy, leadership development and member publications are services that are furnished with state dues.
- **Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation Services Program = \$3.** Clark County is a part of this program in which the district coordinator acts as the county secretary. There are three portions to the program that include administrative, financials and the newsletter.
- **American Farm Bureau Federation = \$4.** A portion of your dues are forwarded to support at the national level. These funds support agriculture's voice in our nation's capital as well as the many programs that AFBF has in place to educate consumers, share the message of agriculture and provide online resources to members.
- **Accidental Death Policy = \$1.** The accidental death insurance policy is a benefit of membership that covers you as a member, your spouse and eligible children. Coverage begins at \$500 and increases in value for the member and spouse with each consecutive year of membership up to \$3,500.
- **Portage County Farm Bureau = \$6.** This funds local events and activities including county meetings, scholarships, Ag in the Classroom and many more to promote Farm Bureau and agriculture in Portage County.

Anyone whose membership dues are due, will receive an invoice in mid-August reflecting this increase.

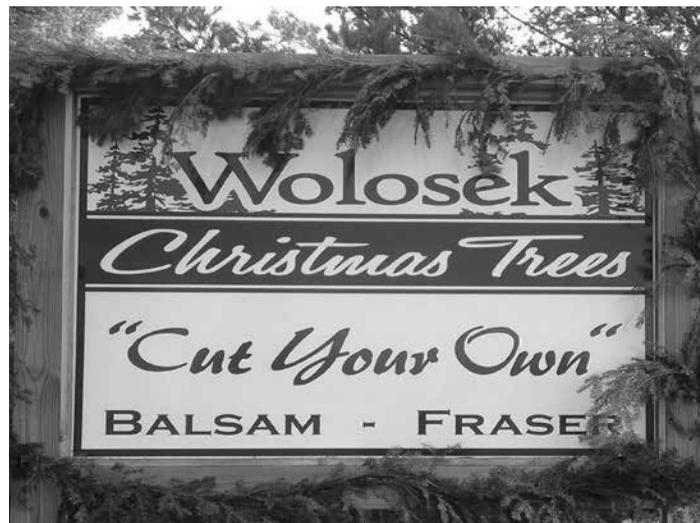
Thank you for being a member of Portage County Farm Bureau.

Spreading Christmas Cheer



Portage County president and co-owner of Eron's Event Barn delivered the Christmas trees for the Christmas Cheer project. The families who received them were very grateful. Thank you to those who nominated them, along with Wolosek Christmas Trees for donating the trees and stands and Portage County Farm Bureau who donated the decorations. Eron's Event Barn also gave each

family \$100 to spend on gifts or other needs. If you see Eron's Event Barn staff, please thank them for their generosity. Check out donators on Facebook. For more details on the event or to connect with our sponsors be sure to follow them on Facebook at @Eronseventbarn, @WolosekChristmasTrees and at Portage County Farm Bureau and Young Farmer and Agriculturalist.



Ag Today Readers



Agriculture is everywhere! From the time we wake up in the morning until we end our day at night, we have encountered agriculture through the food we eat, the clothes we wear, and the fuel we use for transportation.

Ag Today is a great reading supplement for third through fifth grade elementary students to learn about agriculture.

The six issues touch on the six themes of the National

Agricultural Literacy Outcomes that can be integrated into science, social studies and language arts curriculum. Each reader provides real-world connections to STEM and makes learning relevant for students in becoming agriculturally literate. The issue titles are:

- Agriculture is Everywhere
- Food, Health and Lifestyle
- Agriculture and the Environment
- Culture, Society, Economy and Geography
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
- Plants and Animals for Food, Fiber and Energy

Ag Today Readers come in a set with one Educator Guide and 25 student guides. They are \$5 per packet. They may also be downloaded for free from the Ag in the Classroom website at www.agclassroom.org/student/agtoday.cfm.

There are Benefits to Your Farm Bureau Membership:

Financial

- AgriPlan Medical Reimbursement Program
- Farm Bureau Bank

Supplies and Products

- John Deere's GreenFleet™ Loyalty Rewards Program
- Case IH
- Caterpillar
- FS-GROWMARK Patronage
- Grainger
- Office Depot

Communication

- AgriVisor
- The Country Today

Insurance

- Rural Mutual Insurance Company
- Farm Bureau Financial Services

Protection

- \$500 Reward Protection Program
- Accidental Death Policy

Health

- ScriptSave® Prescription Drug Savings Card
- Life Line

Travel

- AAA
- AVIS Car Rental Discount Program
- Budget
- Choice Hotels International, Inc.
- Wyndham Hotel Group

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

Portage County Focuses on Membership



The membership year is **October 1-September 30**, and each year the county has new goals to achieve to maintain current membership numbers.

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation provides membership volunteers and county farm bureaus with incentives to achieve their goals.

County Farm Bureau volunteers will receive \$20 for every new voting or associate member they sign between **October 1, 2017 and September 28**. Qualifying new members must (a) have no previous Farm Bureau membership, or (b) be more than 25 months past their due date.

County Farm Bureau will receive \$1,000 cash award if the county Farm Bureau reaches its new voting goal by the **March 30**, month-end cut-off.

Farm Bureau volunteers qualify as members of the Farm Bureau Proud Club by signing five or more new Farm Bureau members during the membership year. Members of the 2018 Farm Bureau Proud Club and their spouse/guest will receive exclusive recognition at the December 2018 WFBF Annual Meeting. Farm Bureau Proud Club members also receive a commemorative pin and a special gift in recognition of their efforts.

Members: Share Your Story on Social Media



Are you passionate about sharing your agriculture story with the public? Wisconsin Farm Bureau is looking for members to share their story on social media. Some ways you can get involved are:

Ask A Farmer Friday: Film a short video answering a common question about food or farming to be shared on Facebook.

Instagram or Snapchat Takeover: Give WFBF followers a glimpse into a typical day on your farm or at work.

Carry Farm Bureau Down the Field

First Down: Volunteer membership workers who sign up at least one new member by **January 31** will receive Farm Bureau microwave popcorn.

Two-point Conversion: Volunteer membership workers who sign up two or more new members by **February 28** will have the opportunity to autograph their district's commemorative Farm Bureau Proud Football that will be displayed at county and statewide meetings and awarded by drawing one of those who signed it at the end of the membership year.

Field Goal: Volunteer membership workers who sign up three or more new members by **March 31** will receive a Farm Bureau Proud Knit Cap.

Touchdown: Volunteer membership workers who sign up seven or more new members by **July 31** will receive a Farm Bureau Proud Fleece to be presented at their county annual meeting.

For membership applications or further information contact District 8 Coordinator Ashleigh Calaway at 715.781.2306 or acalaway@wfbf.com.



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
Promotion and Education Chair,
Melissa Eron 715.498.7013

Director, John Herman 715.630.7317
Director, John Kosmalski 715.677.3857
Director, Leroy Miller 715.677.3435
Director, Mark Schaffner 715.370.2904
Director, Nathan Wolosek 715.421.5342

Portage County Farm Bureau 888.385.5945
WFBF Board Director, Don Radtke 715.573.7208
WFBF Promotion and Education Chair,
Lauren McCann 715.539.2892
WFBF YFA Chair,
Beth and Matt Schaefer 920.728.4948
District 8 Coordinator, Ashleigh Calaway 866.355.7348
RMIC District Manager, Dave Meihak 715.344.6220

District 8 Membership Kick Off and Committee Training

When: Saturday, January 27

Location: Randall's Beers and Cheers, Abbottsford

Time: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., lunch will be provided.

SAVE the DATE

Come and learn the ins and outs of running a successfully committee by Director of Leadership and Training for the WFBF Wendy Kannel. This is open to all members.

We also will be hosting the District 8 membership kick off. Executive Director of Member Relations Bob Leege will discuss the importance of not only gaining but retaining members to ensure your county Farm Bureau stays healthy.

Announcing the IGNITE Conference

Join us for the 2018 IGNITE Conference at the Holiday Inn Conference Center in Stevens Point on **April 5-6**. IGNITE: Innovate, Grow, Network, Inform, Train, Engage is a state-wide information, training and fun-filled member engagement meeting for county Farm Bureau members.

The purposes is the strengthen county leaders and Farm Bureau by providing them with program ideas, resources and new skills to carry out the mission of their county Farm Bureau. More than 20 workshops will be offered following four training tracks: 1. Governance and organization 2. Building Farm Bureau 3. Communicating for agriculture and Farm Bureau 4. Policy, issues and advocacy.

No matter what your involvement in Farm Bureau is, this a great opportunity to network with other county leaders and get more involved. Mark your calendars now.

