

# Grassroots

District 4 News

## So, What's New?



**Joe Bragger**

WFBF District 4 Director

As we celebrate our organization's 100-year anniversary, it causes us to reflect on the past as we try to strategically position our farms and organization for the next 100 years.

Let's look at a short timeline.

In 1919, we celebrated the end of World War I, a war that still used Cavalry charges against entrenched soldiers to disastrous results. While we celebrated, the farm crisis of the 1920s was starting. The crisis was driven largely as a result of farmers supplying the world with food for the war effort.

When things stabilized and farmers around the world were able to once again produce, U.S. farmers were left with a large oversupply issue.

This created the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1929 that brought government aid to co-ops, in order for the Federal Farm Board to make loans and payments in hopes of stabilizing farmers as they tried to work through the surplus.

In 1933, the Agricultural Adjustment Act was designed around seven major crops: corn, wheat, cotton, rice, peanuts, tobacco and milk. The program was an attempt at paying farmers not to plant crops to decrease the surplus.

So, what's new? We still have a situation with major surpluses driving down prices, we have uncertain foreign markets, we have government involvement in agriculture, though many say, "we want government out of farming," we constantly lobby for more governmental support, and finally we are right back where we started in a farm crisis.

Rural Electrification Act of 1936, one of the

causes of distress in agriculture, was the lack of electrical power in many of our rural areas. To bring electricity to rural areas, the government put together a series of programs to promote rural electrification.

So, what's new? Today we have a similar issue with broadband as many rural areas and communities are underserved and the government is stepping in with programs to provide technology to our farms and towns.

For more than 100 years, we have considered that technology will bring prosperity to farmers. While certainly things are improving, we are still in a situation because of our low population density; we are at a disadvantage when compared with our urban centers.

Locks and dams on the Mississippi, starting around 1916 with lock and dam #1, were

As I look to the future, the biggest threat to me that comes with a milestone of 100 years would be falling back on how we have done things in the past.

So, what's new? Quite a few things, actually. We no longer have a Farm Bureau Queen or Miss Farm Bureau, as women gained the right to vote nationally in 1920 (see the 100-year theme here) their role has changed greatly.



Now, women own some of the most successful farms and businesses in the country.

We also have changed from having a Women's Committee to a Promotions and Education Committee and it is with great pride, that it was our district that unanimously led the charge for change.

So, what's going to be new?

I know one thing that won't be and that is the role of our membership in shaping the policy of the organization. We have one of the best policy development processes.

You need to ensure that this process stays in place. You need to be part of the process and advocate so that we can change farmers' lives and provide stability to our futures.

We need to remember what we stand for but be able to challenge our beliefs and not be afraid of change, rather we should be the force of change.

As always enough is too much.

Happy birthday, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation.

**"When you get to be 100 years old, certainly you've done things right, however, as a wise man has said, "When the day comes that you believe you are as good as you are, you're in trouble."**

mostly constructed around the 1930s and 1940s, resulting in the 27 we have today. While the locks and dams have been a tremendous asset to agriculture they are aging and need to be replaced.

So, what's new? Certainly not the locks and dams that should help to transport our products up and down the river quicker and more efficiently.

In different capacities, I have gone to Washington, D.C., with groups or individually for more than 14 years and have either spoken to or listened as someone else spoke.

Farm Bureau has been around for 100 years; reflect on the times and consider the changes that have occurred.

## Lots to See and Do During the YFA Conference

Are you attending the YFA Conference? Are you thinking about it and are unsure of what the hype is about? You do not want to miss the 2019 YFA Conference happening on December 6-8 at the Kalahari Resorts in Wisconsin Dells.

Look at what is happening at the conference:

### Friday, December 6

First time attendees are invited to attend the First-Timers' Orientation session. The conference will officially kick off with the YFA Welcome Dinner celebrating Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's 100th birthday. Then, Districts will break out for district YFA meetings before adjourning to Tom Foolerys Adventure Park for an evening of bowling, mini golf, laser tag, go-karts, Ferris wheel and more.

### Saturday, December 7



In the morning, we will kick off with the Discussion Meet quarterfinals. Breakfast will be held in conjunction with the

first general session, featuring Paul Long, a motivational speaker and consultant who has challenged the corporate landscape for more than a decade while engaging audiences around the globe.

Through his concept of Fundamism, infectious spirit and unique take on fun in the workplace, Paul has provided memorable experiences at hundreds of events while championing pediatric cancer research.

After brunch, members can sit in on the Discussion Meet semifinals and the Excellence in Ag finalist presentations. There also will be a selection of YFA workshops, each lasting 45 minutes, to choose from, including:

- Hot Topics in Agriculture, WFBF Governmental Relations Team
- Consumer Insights and Trends: Are we ready? Melissa Weyland, Regional Pool Manager; CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley
- Yes, Unicorns are Real: How to Hire Rockstars, Jacob Smoker, the Smoker Farm Sold, Sold, SOLD! Justin and Livia Doyle, OnPoint Auction Service

Agriculture Lending Panel, presenters from Wisconsin's ag lending community  
What's App in Agriculture, panel discussion Farm Bureau Advocacy and You, AFBF PAL participants

The evening dinner reception will focus on 100 years of Farm Bureau, with panel discussions hosted by 'This Week in AgriBusiness' co-host and co-founder, Max Armstrong.



He will facilitate a discussion with past WFBF presidents, staff and legislative partners looking back on the first 100 years of Wisconsin Farm Bureau and the organization's impact on Wisconsin agriculture. The evening will conclude with a Farm Bureau family reunion and social.

### Sunday, December 8



The morning will begin with the YFA and Collegiate Discussion Meet finals. The YFA Conference will conclude with a buffet brunch and final general session featuring AFBF President, Zippy Duvall.

Zippy has served as the President of American Farm Bureau Federation since January 2016 and is a third-generation farmer from Georgia. In addition to a 400 beef cows, he grows hay. Zippy and his wife, Bonnie, also raise more than 750,000 broilers each year.

Are you interested in attending the YFA Conference? There are sponsorships available from your county Farm Bureau. If you are between the ages of 18 and 35 and are interested in attending the YFA Conference, please contact District 4 Coordinator Cassie Olson by October 18 at 715.896.4526 or colson@wfbf.com.

## WFBF Promotion and Education Committee to Host Leadership Boot Camp Media Training

Join the WFBF Promotion and Education Committee for the WFBF Leadership Boot Camp series.

The training will be held from 10 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. on **Saturday, November 16**, at the Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center in Manitowoc.

The focus will be on media advocacy.

As farmers and agriculturists, it is important that we have the tools and training to provide media and social media outlets with the correct information about 21<sup>st</sup> century agriculture.

This training series will help prepare you for interacting with the media, improve your interview skills and provide tips on how to advocate for agriculture using social media.

This training is open to Farm Bureau members. The WFBF Promotion and Education Committee expects attendees of the leadership Boot Camp Training to gain confidence in their skills and abilities to work with the media and increase their engagement in advocating for agriculture through traditional and social media outlets.

RSVP by **Friday, October 25**.

Leadership



Training Series

Brought to you by the WFBF Promotion and Education Committee

Mail form and check, payable to: **Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation** to WFBF, Mandy Masters, P.O. Box 5550, Madison, WI 53705.

**Cost:** \$20 per person, includes lunch and Wisconsin Discovery Center admission

**Number attending:** \_\_\_\_\_ **County:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Mark Your Calendar for Promotion and Education



**Darby Sampson**  
Promotion and Education Chair

As the air turns a little cooler, we'll be getting into 'meeting season' soon.

The Promotion and Education Committee has a few events coming up that you

should mark your calendar.

First, our Leadership Boot Camp Training Series will take participants to the new Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center in Manitowoc.

The workshop will focus on interview training and promoting agriculture with social media. Attendees can tour the facility after the workshop.

Next, is the WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference. The Promotion and Education Committee is hosting a breakout session with author Lisl Detlefson, author of "Right This Very Minute," the Ag in the Classroom Book of the Year.

To celebrate the Wisconsin Farm Bureau centennial, the committee also has challenged members.

We have challenged members to donate 100 items per year of Wisconsin Farm Bureau for a

lofty goal of 10,000 items for charity.

Items can be food or personal items such as shampoo, toothbrushes or diapers. Please gather items from your county membership and bring them to the trade show area at the Kalahari Resorts. Items will be distributed throughout the state.

Finally, the IGNITE Conference, which will be held on March 26-27, 2020. This conference is held every other year and focuses on making your county Farm Bureau stronger by providing program ideas, resources and new skills.

I encourage every county Farm Bureau to sponsor members to attend.

Wishing you a safe and successful harvest.

## Young Farmers and Agriculturists Activities



**Rosli Bragger**  
YFA Chair

As you may know, the WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference are on December 6-9 at the Kalahari Resorts and Convention Center in

Wisconsin Dells.

The YFA Committee has some great activities planned that go with our centennial theme,

including Tom Foolery's Adventure Park on Friday evening and a conference-wide scavenger hunt.

I want to recognize Kyle Danzinger, Allison Bragger and Andrea Rippley of Buffalo County who will participate in the Discussion Meet at the YFA Conference.

I hope to see some of the great District 4 members support this group.

If anyone has questions about the YFA Conference, please contact me at 715.530.2526 or rbragger7@gmail.com.

Currently, I am working with Buffalo

County YFA chair Dustin Ellis to plan a fall-themed event for families. There will be more information for YFA members as we finish planning the event.

I want to hear from District 4 YFA members with recommendations or activities that you want to participate in or help organize.

If you or anyone in your county has a suggestion, please contact me or your county chair by October 20. I want to plan an event before the WFBF Annual Meeting.

Have a great harvest and I hope to see you at a YFA event soon.

# Save the Date

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's



## March 27-28

Marriott Madison West, Madison

## Registration

Early Bird Registration through March 4: \$140

After March 4: \$175

Registration will open October 15.

## Hotel Information

**Marriott Madison West**

1313 John Q Hammons Drive

Middleton, WI 53562

**Hotel Room Rate: \$139 + tax**

Presented by:



## A Message From the President: The Power of Policy



### Ed Rippley

Buffalo County Farm Bureau president

This year, while Wisconsin Farm Bureau celebrates its centennial, Buffalo County Farm Bureau is celebrating its 71<sup>st</sup> year. In 1948, we were coming out of an all-out war economy.

When you look back at the first Buffalo County board of directors, could they ever comprehend the struggle of today's farmer?

Labeling on containers would not have to say GMO-free, gluten-free, milk from cows not treated with rBST or made with cage-free eggs. That wasn't important. Some of these resolutions do not seem that far off from today's standards.

The 10 resolutions adopted by Buffalo County Farm Bureau in 1948 were:

1. We recommend greater efficiency in the highway departments of various counties in the state.
2. We recommend that all gasoline used on the farm be colored to distinguish it from gas used on the highway.
3. Due to the shortage of veterinarians we recommend that the Bangs Program be extended for two more years from the time when the present program expires.
4. We recommend the College Agriculture sponsor a veterinary course.
5. We recommend that we are opposed to a sales tax of any kind.
6. We recommend that the bounty on rattlesnakes be raised to \$2 per snake.
7. We recommend that the Wisconsin Farm Bureau should utilize every resource at its command to bring about a better

understanding of farm problems by urban people.

8. We recommend that the Rural Mail Delivery be extended to serve more patrons that have no delivery service at this time.
9. We recommend that Parity on farm commodities be continued.
10. We feel that school consolidation in Buffalo County has worked hardships and is somewhat detrimental to this county on account of highway conditions and that further consolidations be given careful consideration.

Some of these resolutions have worked, like number five. We still have no sales tax on farm items. While some of them are almost an item again like number seven, a better understanding of farm problems by urban people. These resolutions were a part of an article shared in 1998 during the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Buffalo County Farm Bureau.

## Pee Wee Livestock Show is a Continued Success

By Dustin and Ashley Ellis, Buffalo County Farm Bureau YFA chairs

The Buffalo County Farm Bureau organized the Pee Wee Livestock show again during the Buffalo County Fair.

We had a great turnout and increased participation at the show. We had almost 20 dairy exhibitors, eight beef exhibitors and 10 sheep and goat exhibitors.

We were glad to have such interest and support with the Pee Wee Livestock Show as we believe that this will help promote the future of the fair.

The Pee Wee Livestock Show is for children second grade and younger who are not yet eligible to show with 4-H.

It gives a child an opportunity to get comfortable in the show ring with an animal. Each exhibitor received a participation ribbon and \$5 cash.

The sponsors were Buffalo County Farm Bureau, Buffalo County Holstein Association, Buffalo County Dairy Promotion Committee, Melitta Schaffner, Doug George Plumbing and Rolling Acres Ranch.

We also appreciate the help of the Buffalo County Dairy Princess and her attendants who helped hand out ribbons and asked each exhibitor a couple questions.



Abby exhibits her lamb Baby Katie during the 2019 Buffalo County Fair Pee Wee Livestock Show. Buffalo County Farm Bureau sponsored the Pee Wee Livestock Show.

## Congratulations to Calf Grant Recipient

The Buffalo County Farm Bureau wants to extend congratulations to Nessa Noll.

Noll was the recipient of the 2019 Buffalo County Farm Bureau \$500 calf grant.

With her grant, Noll purchased Vallowhill Lloyds of London, a registered Ayrshire fall calf that was recently named the Grand Champion Junior Ayrshire of the Buffalo County Farm Bureau dairy show.

Buffalo County Farm Bureau is proud to sponsor 4-H and FFA youth with the calf grant program. One of the greatest rewards is seeing success in the show ring.

Congratulations, Nessa, and best of luck in future shows.



## A Message From the President: It's Time For a Slice of Pie



**Steve Strey**

Eau Claire County Farm Bureau president

Another year has passed and brought forth the county annual meeting. It is a time for good food and good

friends, two of my favorite things.

Along with camaraderie and networking, comes great grass roots ideas, discussion and resolutions to form Farm Bureau policy.

Over the years, the power of the people has accomplished a tremendous amount of change to benefit production agriculture, but (you had to know that was coming) I have been thinking.

There are many problems facing American production agriculture that cannot be solved by a resolution in a policy book. I wish it was that simple.

We would just say that dairymen and women should get paid more for their milk, or the local co-op must provide the best service at the cheapest price. I also want a policy that said the record profits the meat packers are making should come back to the cattle feeder, or the price of a bag of seed corn should be adjusted in relation to the price of a bushel of corn.

What we need to realize is, that the U.S. is a republic ruled by capitalism. This is a great thing. It gives the American producer the freedom to generate revenue from his assets by way of hard work, dedication and good management of resources.

The problem for us farmers is, that corporate America has that same freedom. Everyone is trying to get a piece of the pie, and the American farmer isn't even in the kitchen. The way I see it is, we grew the wheat, the apples, the sugar cane and our cows produced the milk. That is OUR pie.

The American farmer needs to be the guy with the knife, deciding who gets how big of a piece, and always making sure he has enough to feed his family. If we continue to be complacent by staying home milking our cows, growing our corn and fattening our steers, the others will continue to erode our choice, our infrastructure and definitely, our margin.

Monsanto, ADM and Cargill, to name a few, will continue to gain more control of American agriculture in search of market share. This leaves the American farmer hoeing a row that he doesn't own, while they eat the pie.

This is why our ancestors left the old country in search of the American dream. We should be ashamed if this dream dies on our watch.

So, what is the answer? If I knew, I wouldn't be writing an article for the Eau Claire County Farm Bureau at 10 p.m., but (there it is again), I have a few ideas to get started.

Step one is done. We are WFBF members. There are a lot of smart people. Let's put our heads together and work. There aren't enough of us left to fight amongst ourselves. Step two is identify the problem. I hope my previous ramblings helped with that, but I am willing to listen to other ideas. Step three is take back the pie, the power. We need to keep the power local. We live in the United States of America. The power belongs to the states and the counties, the towns, the people and the FARMERS.

The other night, while watching the presidential debate, I realized that none of those candidates know what is best for my farm. If we let Washington, D.C., and its special interests keep ruling agriculture, the kitchen door will remain locked. The American farmer needs to be on the county Farm Bureau board, the school board, the town board and the county board. Farmers need to be legislators, mayors, governors and, yes, maybe even the President.

I urge you to get off the farm and get involved. Let's take back the power to where it belongs. Who's with me? I'm hungry for pie.

## Eau Claire County Annual Meeting Welcomes Several New Faces

The Eau Claire County Farm Bureau held its annual meeting on September 21 at the Clear Creek Town Hall in Strum.

More than 50 members and guests attended the annual meeting that featured a catered meal from Big Mikes Meats and Phillips Catering LLC in Augusta.

Recently hired Rural Mutual Insurance Company agents Bobby Mickelson and Jacob Knutson gave an update from Rural Mutual Insurance Company. They shared the hiring of Dan Merk as the company Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer, provided an update on the Dairy Revenue Protection program and outlined the programs that Rural Mutual Insurance Company sponsors and supports.

Warren Petryk, the 93<sup>rd</sup> District Representative in the Wisconsin State Assembly, introduced himself to the membership. He shared that he values his Farm Bureau membership and working with Farm Bureau members.

He encouraged Farm Bureau members to contact his office with comments, questions and concerns.

Eau Claire County land conservation manager, Greg Leonard, shared an update on the manure storage ordinance that several Farm Bureau members sat on the committee for. He shared that Eau Claire County has received funding from the Department of Natural Resources for a demonstration farm in Augusta.

The department also has received an anonymous donation for the purchase of a no-till drill that will be available to rent once it is purchased.

Eau Claire County Farm Bureau director, Matt Krenz, provided a summary of the WFBF Leaders Trip to Washington, D.C. He provided updates from meetings with Senators Ron Johnson and Tammy Baldwin as well as his experience visiting the USDA and Australian Embassy.

During the elections process, Lisa Pettis was re-elected as the Promotion and Education chair and Heather Erdman was elected as the new YFA chair. Brandon Boettcher, Devin Schlewitz, Patrick Baecker and Jody Wilhelm were re-elected to the board of directors, Mark Karow and Steve Erdman were new directors elected to the board. Finally, Steve Strey and Matt Krenz

were elected to serve as delegates during the WFBF Annual Meeting in December before concluding the business meeting with a robust policy discussion.

The evening concluded with an update from Brenda Dowiasch about her experience in the WFBF Leadership Institute. She encouraged other Farm Bureau members to consider applying for the class.

The board wants to extend appreciation to vice president, Lisa Pettis, for her work in planning and preparing for the annual meeting. They also want to thank the Farm Bureau members who attended and took part.



More than 50 members and guests attended the Eau Claire County annual meeting on September 21 in Strum.

## A Productive Meeting of the Minds in Jackson County

The Jackson County Farm Bureau held its annual meeting on September 15 beginning at noon at Steve and Pat Kling's barn in Taylor.

There were more than 30 members in attendance who enjoyed a potluck meal before the afternoon program.

Despite a lower attendance than previous years, there was plenty to celebrate during the annual meeting.

Rural Mutual Insurance Company District Manager, David Meihak, recognized agent Barb Brueggen for her years of service to the Jackson County Farm Bureau and Rural Mutual Insurance Company. He also introduced Matt Rhodes as a recently hired agent in Black River Falls and Rural Mutual Insurance Company's Rookie of the Year from 2018.

The Jackson County Farm Bureau board of directors shared their appreciation for Barb Brueggen with a token of appreciation. The board presented Brueggen with a gift after the annual meeting.

WFBF District 4 Director Joe Bragger gave an update on behalf of the state board of directors and reported on the WFBF Leaders Trip to Washington, D.C.

He thanked Clint Sampson of Melrose for representing District 4 on the trip and for speaking to national legislators while in Washington, D.C.

Bragger also encouraged members to speak up during the policy development process and to reach out throughout the year with any questions or concerns they might have.

The afternoon business session concluded with elections and a resolutions discussion. Savannah Brown was re-elected as the county Promotion and Education chair and Erica Olson was re-elected as the YFA chair.

Al Sampson and Ryan Sawyer were re-elected to the board of directors. Steve Kling, Ryan Sawyer and Nate Kling were re-elected as the president, vice president and secretary/treasurer, respectively.

Finally, Steve Kling, Erica Olson and Nate Kling were elected to represent the county as delegates at the WFBF Annual Meeting in December.

Thank you those who volunteered at and attended the county annual meeting.



David Meihak gave an update on behalf of Rural Mutual Insurance Company.



Joe Bragger gave a report on behalf of the WFBF Board of Directors and about the WFBF Leaders Trip to Washington, D.C.



Steve Kling was re-elected as Jackson County Farm Bureau's president and hosted the annual meeting at his barn in Taylor.

## Karls Joins Jackson County Farm Bureau Board of Directors

**Name:** Matt Karls

**Job title/Profession:** Mycogen Seeds territory manager

- 1. How did you become involved in Farm Bureau?** I first joined WFBF when I lived in Dane County. Since moving to Jackson County in 2015, I was not active until recently when I was asked to join the county Farm Bureau board. I thought this was a perfect opportunity to get reconnected with WFBF.
- 2. What interested you about serving on your county's Farm Bureau board?** I am a couple of generations removed from the farm, but as the number of farmers continues to decrease it will take more people like myself to stand up for those who still farm. My relatives still farm in Dane, which is the original farm settled by the Karls family in the late 1800s. I've always wanted to be impactful in the agriculture industry even though I am not directly farming and WFBF is an organization that makes it possible to do just that.
- 3. What are you most looking forward to about serving on the board?** Considering the troubling times in production agriculture, the confusion around the food industry caused by false information and fear marketing that has attributed to the lack of trust by the consumers;

I am looking forward to continuing to be an ag advocate: speaking up for the truth. There is not a one-size-fits-all way to farm. Like how the WFBF members' demographics during the course of 100 years have changed significantly, so have the advances in how we produce the safest and most environmentally responsible food in the world. I look forward to using my experiences in biotechnology and the seed industry in many ways to help the WFBF's mission.

- 4. What is one Farm Bureau-related goal of yours?** My short-term goal is to recruit more Jackson County members. While being on the Wisconsin Soybean Association Board of Directors for close to three years, I realize the importance of these organizations to have a strong grassroots membership base. I believe that every member counts and can help make a difference in his or her own way.



## Farm Bureau's Strong Presence at the Jackson County Fair

By Savannah Brown, Promotion and Education chair

The Jackson County Farm Bureau had a lot of fun at the Jackson County Fair.

The fair kicked off as we recognized Dan Peterson as the Outstanding Farm Family of the

Year on Wednesday night.

On Friday night, we held the annual exhibitor selfie scavenger hunt with more than 35 exhibitors participating.

Saturday afternoon, members volunteered by scooping up dairy treats in the Youth Dairy

Project ice cream stand and later serving food at the buyer's reception following the livestock auction.

Thank you for attending the fair and making it another great year.



Caption: Jackson County Farm Bureau director, Leonard Olson (right), presents Dan Peterson (center) with the 2019 Outstanding Farm Family of the Year award. The award is co-sponsored by the Jackson County Farm Bureau and the Black River Falls FFA Alumni.



Jackson County directors (from left) Savannah Brown and Matt Karls helped serve food during the buyer's dinner following the Saturday evening livestock auction.



More than 35 youth exhibitors participated in the Selfie Scavenger Hunt on Friday night. Winners received prizes donated by local businesses and every participant received a free Black River Falls FFA Alumni Shake.



Jackson County Farm Bureau members (from left) Erica Olson, Dominick Gentry, Maddie Gallagher, Savannah Brown and Keith Henke volunteered in the Youth Dairy Project ice cream stand on Saturday afternoon.

## A Well-Attended, Productive Annual Meeting in Monroe County

Monroe County Farm Bureau held its 70<sup>th</sup> annual meeting on August 11 at Jack and Pat Herricks' Farm near Cashton. There were 65 members and guests present as the county celebrated Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's centennial, heard from organization representatives and elected its leaders for the coming year.

Representative Loren Oldenberg introduced himself to the membership and provided an update on his first year serving in the Wisconsin State Assembly. He thanked the Farm Bureau for support throughout his first year and for members who contacted him on issues important to the county Farm Bureau.

Rural Mutual Insurance Company's CEO Dan Merk also attended and provided an update on his first six months leading the

company. He shared his appreciation for the family atmosphere that Monroe County Farm Bureau provides and the importance of family legacy while celebrating WFBF's centennial.

WFBF Director of Communications Sarah Hetke served as the afternoon's guest speaker. Hetke shared the role of WFBF's public relations division and the services staff offers WFBF members. She introduced the Farm Neighbors Care campaign and stressed the importance of mental health resources in the rural community.

There were several changes and additions to the county board of directors. Scott Schmitz and Jack Herricks were re-elected to the board of directors. Matt Kortbein was elected as the new county Young Farmer and Agriculturist chair; Kathy Schmitz was re-elected as the Promotion

and Education chair. Jim Herricks, the former YFA chair, joined the board as a director and was elected to serve as the secretary/treasurer. Derek Trescher also was appointed to the board as a director.

Jack Herricks, Al Ferries, Dawn Powell, Jim Herricks, J. Wells and Derek Trescher were elected to serve as delegates during the WFBF Annual Meeting in December.

Members also voted to support 19 resolutions that will be considered for policy during the WFBF Policy Development Meeting.

Overall, it was another well-attended, productive annual meeting for the Monroe County Farm Bureau.

Thank you to those who prepared for and attended the meeting and for another great year in Monroe County.



WFBF District 4 Director and Buffalo County Farm Bureau director Joe Bragger provides members attending the Monroe County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting with an update on behalf of the WFBF Board of Directors.



Sarah Hetke, WFBF Director of Communications, provided a keynote address during the Monroe County Farm Bureau annual meeting. Hetke described the public relations division of WFBF and the services staff provides for members.



Dan Merk, Rural Mutual Insurance Company's newly hired Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer, provided an update on his first six-months in his role. He shared his appreciation for the relationship Farm Bureau has with Rural Mutual Insurance Company, as well as his appreciation of the family atmosphere that Monroe County Farm Bureau provides.



Representative Loren Oldenberg updated the members on his first year serving in the Wisconsin State Assembly. Oldenberg was elected in November 2018.

## Kortbein and Trescher Join the Monroe County Farm Bureau Board

**Name:** Derek Trescher

**Job title/Profession:** Farm Hand Treschers  
Town View Dairy/Ag  
Sales at Hundt Implement



- 1. How did you become involved in Farm Bureau?** My family has been active in Farm Bureau and I believe that Farm Bureau is a great voice for agriculture.
- 2. What interested you about serving on your county's Farm Bureau board?** I believe that becoming a board member will allow me to have the opportunity to get more involved with the county Farm Bureau.
- 3. What are you most looking forward to about serving on the board?** Meeting more people and helping to be a voice for Monroe County Farm Bureau.
- 4. What is one Farm Bureau-related goal of yours?** I am interested in helping and one day serving as the YFA chair.

**Name:** Matt Kortbein

**Job title/Profession:** Sales professional for  
Pioneer Seed Company; Kortbein Farms



- 1. How did you become involved in Farm Bureau?** I first was introduced to Farm Bureau during my time in FFA and as a State FFA Officer. I attended Farm Forum and interacted with Farm Bureau at other events. Once I attended college, I was active in the Collegiate Farm Bureau at UW-River Falls. Becoming a member in Monroe County was a natural fit.
- 2. What interested you about serving on your county's Farm Bureau board?** Following my involvement at college, I was interested in getting involved. Through talking to current board members and others, I am driven to serve as the YFA chair.
- 3. What are you most looking forward to about serving on the board?** I am looking forward to getting to know Farm Bureau members in Monroe County and working with YFA members who share a similar background and goals.
- 4. What is one Farm Bureau-related goal of yours?** I hope to continue to offer great opportunities to YFA and other members from around Monroe County. Today's agricultural industry is diverse and has many interesting facets. I hope to explore these through activities and events.



## MONROE COUNTY COLORING CONTEST

### Age Groups:

3 & 4

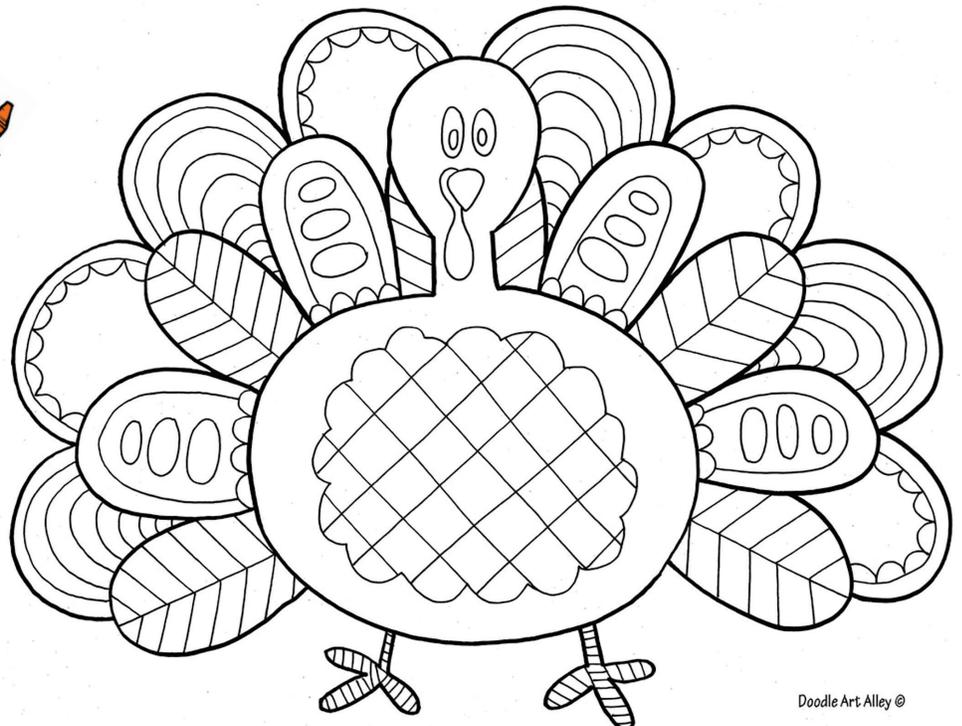
5 & 6

7 & 8



*A prize is given to a winner in each age group.*

*Must be a resident of Monroe County.*



Doodle Art Alley ©

Mail entries by November 18 to:

**Peggy Wright**  
605 W. Wisconsin Street  
Sparta, WI 54656

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Phone:**

**Age:**

## The Need for Agriculture Education

By Kendra Goplin, Ag Promotions chair

Recently, I visited the ag department at Milwaukee Vincent High School. The reason for my trip was to explore urban agriculture at the high school level as I explore the possibility of becoming an ag teacher. I really had no idea what to expect, knowing that it would be different than what I was used to.

As soon as I walked into the building the atmosphere was high energy with students running here or there, yelling hellos and greetings to friends, but they stopped and stared when I walked by.

The school population is approximately 900 students, 98 percent are African American, 99 percent qualify for free or reduced school lunches.

Suddenly, I was part of the minority. When I got to the agriculture wing, I was greeted by one of the ag teachers and the school's high energy

puppy named Ryder. Ryder was purchased by the school for the students to have a therapy dog in the classroom. But Ryder isn't the only animal Vincent has to offer their students to have a hands-on learning experience.

In the classroom, they had a bearded dragon, a gecko, a milk snake, a rat, a hamster, a guinea pig, a duck, three chinchillas, two birds, three rabbits, a tortoise and some fish.

Not only did they have animals in the classroom, they had a barn. In the barn, they had five nanny goats and six kids, two flocks of chickens, a few ducks, a horse and a small flock of sheep.

These animals serve as the students' main source of animal interaction and are cared for by the students in the advanced animal science class.

The ag teachers have three classes a day, they teach a freshman level, an intro level and advanced classes respective to their department.

They have six different ag teachers specializing in one of the following areas: Animal science, horticulture, environmental science, ag business, food science and they even counted their culinary teacher as part of the ag department.

One advantage of having multiple ag teachers is less stress because they can be an expert at one field of agriculture compared with the other ag teachers in the area who need to be knowledgeable about lots of topics.

As I look back at this experience, I realize that there is a need for ag education everywhere and for all ages. As the Ag Promotions chair for Trempealeau County, I am looking forward to working with the fourth-grade students in our county.

I will schedule classroom visits in the coming weeks. If you have contacts at your elementary schools, please encourage them to take advantage of this opportunity.

Be. Ag. Strong.

## Shakin' Up Shakes at the Trempealeau County Fair

By Shane Goplin, Trempealeau County Farm Bureau president

While we had our fair share of hurdles and obstacles, we ended up having a successful fair season. Once again, we rented a semi-trailer to store our ice cream and milk in for the duration of the fair.

This not only helps us by not having to cross the busy highway to get supplies, it saves a lot of time. We can get supplies with only the use of a hand cart.

Thank you, Todd Quarne, for the use of the hand cart. Also, by having the trailer, we can help the fair board and 4-H leaders by letting them use it.

As you remember, everyone was bracing for the heat of Friday. No doubt it was hot. One might think that if it is hot, a cold milkshake

would go over well. But when it is that hot, most people opted for plain old water, myself included. So, sales were not that great. Then Saturday came along and for the first time I can remember, the fairgrounds were evacuated due to storms. Until about 3 p.m., we only sold a handful of shakes.

But after everyone settled into fair mode, we ended up having a respectable fair. We ended up selling just short of 5,000 shakes from Wednesday through Sunday. By no means was it a record year but given the weather, we are pleased with the outcome.

None of this would have been possible without the people who volunteered time to help make the shake stand a success. So, along with the rest of the board of directors, I want to extend a sincere thank you. Thank you for

taking time out of your busy schedule to help.

As you may know part of the profits goes to help our youth. This year, we sponsored showmanship winners in animal classes. Also, we gave to our FFA chapters as well as Wisconsin State Fair exhibitors who helped serve shakes.

Currently, we are looking at how we can improve the process for next year. Between everyone on the board, we attend fairs and other events throughout the year, and we always look at how other people serve shakes.

During our last monthly meeting, we did some brainstorming, and I am going to say at the present time we may have some new features coming in the years ahead.

Thanks again to those who made the fair a success.



Leah Oldendorf (left) was Trempealeau County Farm Bureau's first customer of the 2019 shake stand.



Thank you those volunteers and organizations who assisted in serving shakes at the Trempealeau County Fair. Trempealeau County Farm Bureau sold nearly 5,000 shakes during the 2019 Trempealeau County Fair, despite difficult weather conditions.



## Excellent Turnout for the Trempealeau County Annual Meeting

More than 60 members and guests attended the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau annual meeting on August 20. The meeting was held in Blair at the Schroeder Shelter in Memorial Park.

The evening began with recognizing the 12 animal grant recipients for 2019. Each recipient shared his or her project and how he or she intended to use the funds. Derek Husmoen presented each recipient with his or her \$50 grant check.

Brad Pfaff, Secretary-designee of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection served as the guest speaker, sharing his background of growing up on a dairy farm in Mindoro and how it led him to his current position. He shared his appreciation for Farm Bureau and the role it takes in agriculture policy and legislation.

Rural Mutual Insurance Company District Manager Laurie Knutson provided an update on behalf of Rural Mutual. She reported on the dairy revenue protection program, the claims made throughout the winter of 2019 and the dividend program. She thanked the Farm Bureau for being great affiliates of Rural Mutual Insurance and for the relationship the two organizations have with one another.

Joe Bragger, WFBF District 4 Director, provided an update on behalf of the WFBF Board of Directors. He shared how much he enjoys working with and representing District 4 and the members he gets to work with. He extended his appreciation to the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau board of directors for their excellent work and involvement in WFBF state and national functions.

During the election process, Shane Goplin, Todd Quarne, Brian Maliszewski, Derek Husmoen and Mandy Tjoflat were elected to serve as delegates during the WFBF Annual Meeting.

Kendra Goplin was re-elected as the Ag Promotions chair and Mandy Tjoflat was re-elected as the YFA chair. Derek Husmoen was re-elected to his second, three-year term on the board of directors. Shane Goplin, Brian Maliszewski and Amber Radatz were each, respectively, reappointed as the president, vice president and secretary/treasurer.

Thank you to members and guests who attended the county annual meeting. The board of directors is proud to represent many great members and looks forward to another great year of county Farm Bureau activities.



Twelve 4-H and FFA youth received animal grants during the 2019 annual meeting. Each recipient shared information about his or her project during the meeting program.



More than 60 members and guests attended the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau annual meeting on August 20. The meeting was held in Blair at the Schroeder Shelter in Memorial Park.



Brad Pfaff, Secretary-designee of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, served as the guest speaker, sharing his background of growing up on a dairy farm in Mindoro and how it led him to his current position.



## #FarmNeighborsCare

The Wisconsin Farm Center, a free and confidential resource available to farmers in the state, reported more than 2,300 calls from farmers in 2018. As of May 30, 2019, the center had received more than 1,000. Farm Center staff said most of these calls are related to finances and levels of distress.

As farmers face some of the most challenging economic times in decades, Wisconsin agricultural groups are banding together to talk about farm stress and encourage farm neighbors to look after one another.

#FarmNeighborsCare is a social media campaign that asks rural residents to have face-to-face conversations with farmers and agri-business owners. For some, this conversation and check-in may be the dose of positivity needed to make it through a tough day.

To participate, farm neighbors can put together a small 'goodie bag', snack or meal and take a picture to share on Facebook with #FarmNeighborsCare. Deliver that item to a farmer and stay for a few minutes of conversation. This is meant as a time to check in and see how the person or family is doing. Ideally, this will not stop at one conversation, but will become a regular habit.





**County Farm Bureaus**  
PO Box 5550 Madison, WI 53705

Address Service Requested

Non Profit  
Organization  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Platteville, WI 53818  
Permit No. 124

**This Issue Contains  
Highlights for:**

Buffalo County

Eau Claire County

Jackson County

Monroe County

Trempealeau County

# Learn From The Experts

Insurance can be confusing. We created our Learning Center as a resource, to guide you through common insurance questions and money-saving tips.



Farm Insurance



Business Insurance



Personal Insurance



Insurance Questions

Visit [RuralMutual.com/learning-center](http://RuralMutual.com/learning-center) to learn more!

 **Rural Mutual**  
Insurance Company