

# Grassroots

## District 4 News

### Are We Getting Too Top Heavy?



**Joe Bragger**

WFBF District 4 Director

This question was posed at a recent county Farm Bureau meeting. While the question was directed at Farm Bureau in regard to the number of executive directors, directors and other multi-descriptive job titles, some which are undecipherable, I must consider that this is happening everywhere.

As a school board member, I see the trend to go beyond administrators and principals to having lead teachers, instructional coaches, curriculum directors doing fidelity checks and the list goes on. While teachers are trying to teach. Teachers create young minds. Think of your life and how many people are directing your activities?

I used to be a farmer, a term everyone understands and loves, now I guess I'm an agricultural producer or dairy producer yet most of the population outside our circles would have no idea what that is, (with this year's corn crop I might even be a record producer). See the confusion?

Now, with the newly created title of producer even as an individual farmer I have noticed that the level of oversight as to how I operate has been blown to the moon.

Once I made decisions that our farm lived or died by with the biggest fear being that of the milk inspector. Today, I have the Farm Program that has been promoted to help with consumer trust and now, I am scored on animal care, worker care, environmental care and certainly more will be added as originally it was just based on animal welfare.

To be certain, most every farmer does the best they can do while trying to make ends meet. After years of increased 'help' managing to increase consumer confidence, little has changed in the way of farm profitability with prices much lower when compared with inflation as they were when my father farmed 30 years ago. The only solution is to create more milk further degrading prices. We may even be worse off as milk has been highly regulated if not limited in schools driving another generation away from the solid nutrition it provides.

How many more highly paid jobs can be created off the backs of the farmer, and other workers who create things before we say enough.

Perhaps we are seeing that today. In 1996, we had about 26,000 dairy farms in Wisconsin; today, about 6,700, on the news we here of labor shortages and our school had to close for a day due to lack of teachers and substitutes. Parts are becoming hard to find as are general items.

Maybe we need to put our respect and trust once again into those who make and do things other than pass paper around and direct others. Maybe just maybe, it's time to respect the person who truly makes a difference for once they are gone, we will all be lost.

Enough is too much.

### We Do More in District 4



**Kevin Whalen**

District 4 Coordinator

*"Success is not final; failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."*

- Winston S. Churchill

Our continuing courage to work in agriculture shows the character of the farmers of western Wisconsin.

We toil together to make District 4 the success that has endured for more than 100 years.

When I was hired, I was excited for a chance to continue a career that let me work in leadership in agriculture. District 4 is a great place to see that exhibited.

It takes courage and optimism to continue to be a farmer in 2021. Courage to face escalating input costs, unsure weather forecasts and the possibility of market decline. Add in the new risk of tightening climate control measures and it equals a dangerous environment for a food producer.

We have been successful in the past due to hard work and diligence in providing food for all in America. As we continue to supply the basic needs for Americans, we must work together to increase cooperation among producers and help shape the policies of our nation.

Farm Bureau supplies the organizational structure that gives direction to our hard labor and synergy to farmers by bringing out the best in producers. Young and old working together to maintain the strongest agriculture industry in the world.

Being a success is important as an organization. District Four must continue to do the work it takes to maintain that high level of accomplishment.

I am glad that you have taken the time to commit to success by being a member of the Farm Bureau. It takes courage to share labor with other members of your community to keep groups solid and productive.

Along with that commitment, we must also be innovative to try new endeavors as an organization. Each person can motivate others to be open minded. My challenge for you is to try something new that may help others along with helping you feel the fulfillment that servant leadership provides.

District 4 provides opportunity to get involved with agriculture promotion, education, government involvement and self-development. Your county organization is as strong as the effort that all members put into it.

## “So Good To Be Together Again”

On Sept. 13, 10 Farm Bureau members attended the District4 YFA hayride.

The first stop was Elmaro Winery in Trempealeau. The members enjoyed a wine and cheese tasting while getting to know one another.

After the tasting, we hopped on the hay wagon driven by Derek Husmoen to head to Ecker’s Apple Orchard in Trempealeau.

The group enjoyed the views of the old north bank of the mighty Mississippi while enjoying the homemade craft beer of Hog’s Back Brew Farm at the orchard.

Most importantly, the group had a very serious match of cornhole while enjoying the breathtaking view.

Lastly, the members went to Winghaven Pizza in Galesville for dinner. The group enjoyed the music, great company and terrific pizza.

Savannah and Keith Henke look forward to planning another event in 2022 and hope to see you there.



Members enjoyed deluxe accommodations on the District 4 hayride courtesy of Derek Husmoen.



Good company and good conversation at Winghaven Pizza Farm.



## Discussion Meet and Policy Meeting Update

August 3 was an evening with big things happening in District 4.

Revolution Coffee in Black River Falls played host to the Young Farmer and Agriculturists Discussion Meet. The contestants were: Collin Weltzein (first year), Kyle Nilsestuen (first year), Andrea Rippley (veteran) and Kyle Danzinger (veteran).

The four YFA members from two different counties (Buffalo and Trempealeau) discussed the topic: How can Farm Bureau improve its effectiveness at recruiting YF&R (YFA) members and increasing participation in YF&R (YFA) programs?”

The contest had an opening (30-second opening statement), a body (25 minutes of open discussion) and a closing (one-minute closing statement).

The opening and closing statements were given in voluntary order determined by the contestants.

District 4 competitors used nearly every second available for the opening statements.

The openings were very diverse with the veterans inserting humor to increase the audience’s attentiveness. Discussion centered on practical ways to attract some of the top new minds in agriculture. The closings included action terms to how the ideas could be put into motion.

Judges included: Tim Wucherer, Buffalo County Land Conservation Department; Amber Radatz, co-director of Discovery Farms and Nathan Kling, co-owner of Kling Farms.

Thank you to these judges for their donated time. The three selected to compete at the WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference include: Kyle Danzinger, Andrea Rippley and Collin Weltzein.

Activities continued as District 4 Director Joe Bragger opened the annual Policy Meeting by entertaining new resolutions.

Members from the six county Farm Bureaus presented ideas and determined the initial offerings that started as six main ideas.

Many of them reflected the environmental applications to the agriculture industry including large animal operations and the impact on the environment.

Members had strong feelings on local control of land along with management of woods and wildlife. Each idea was listed in a document that was projected for viewing. Modification occurred in all resolutions when all points were discussed.

The final list of resolutions will consist of items from policy night along with resolutions added from each county meeting. The entire package will be submitted to WFBF delegates at the annual meeting.

The resolutions, which passed with majority votes, will be published in the 2022 Farm Bureau Policy of the 102<sup>ND</sup> delegates of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation.



## Checking Out Agriculture's Infrastructure

On Sept. 24, the District 4 Promotion and Education Committee, under the leadership of Brenda Dowiasch, sponsored a tour of Lock and Dam No. 6.

From a suggestion that we learn more about agriculture's infrastructure, Trempealeau County's President Shane Goplin made the comment that we could refer it to the very active Promotion and Education Committee.

Brenda made it a reality by contacting the Lock Master Rojean Heyer, and we were on our way.

Lock and Dam No. 6 is a lock and dam located near Trempealeau, on the Upper Mississippi River near river mile 714.1. It was constructed and placed in operation in June 1936. The last major rehabilitation was from 1989 to 1999. The dam consists of 893-foot concrete structure with five roller gates and 10 tainter gates.

Its earth embankment is 2,600 feet long and the concrete overflow spillway is 1,000 feet long. The lock is 110 feet wide by 600 feet long. The lock and dam are owned and operated by the St. Paul District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley.

Sixty percent of exported grain in the U.S. moves on the Mississippi River. Barges heading up and down must go through the locks and dams of the nation. Everyday about five to six tows go through Lock and Dam No. 6 on the Mississippi River.

Chief of Operations for the Army Corps of Engineers Michael Cox pointed out a tow entering into the lock, when the gates open, the water is equal to that side of the river, "This is a downbound tow. When the tow gets in here and gets tied off, they'll close the gates as you saw. And then the lock operators will make sure that everything's ready to go and then they'll open up the lower valve. And then by gravity flow, they'll empty the water out of the lock chamber until it equalizes with the water levels at

the lower end."

The way lock systems are designed, there's no pumps needed to move that level, it's all done by gravity.

Cox said going south from Minneapolis to the Gulf of Mexico, there are 39 lock and dams, "You can consider it almost like a stair step system. Because the topography of the river increases more the further upstream you go. So, in order to have a navigable pool, where barges and heavy cargo like this can transport, we have to flatten the water out a little bit."

"We need significant water depth all the way through the system to allow nine-foot draft barges and large tows like this to navigate up and down the river." Cox said, "The other reason is to somewhat slow down the flow so tows can navigate a little bit more safely.

Cox explained the process, "So now this towboat, he flanked, he's maneuvering away from the wall so he can get himself positioned and he's going to go into the center of the face of the barges there."

Even though they're called tow boats, they push the barges. Cox points out a three by four group lashed together. They are 800 feet long and a105 feet wide.

That's a tight fit according to Cox, "So when a tow boat operator has nine or in many cases, 15 barges ahead of him, and he has to take that 105-foot width and squeeze it in through the 110 foot lock chamber it takes a lot of maneuvering power."

The tow then heads to the next lock and dam.

The tour lasted about two hours and we faced a strong wind during most of the day. Entertaining parts of Lock and Dam included the great historic photographs on display and the viewing of the gardens on the embankment complete with gourd birdhouses.

Great job, Promotion and Education Committee.



Overview of lock and dam.

## National FFA Convention Results for FFA Chapters from District Four

### National Proficiency Award

**Agricultural Education:** Kendra Goplin,  
Whitehall FFA

### Gold Career Development Event Teams Forestry

Cochrane-Fountain City FFA Gold, ninth place  
Karter Domine, Gold Individual  
Ethan Hunger, Gold Individual  
Tristan Ostrem, Gold Individual

### Silver Career Development Teams

#### Food Science and Technology

Cochrane-Fountain City FFA  
Paige Bagniewski, Gold Individual  
Addyson Lacey, Gold Individual

#### American FFA Degree Recipients

Barbara Irene Dittrich, Cochrane-Fountain City  
Austin George, Mondovi  
Jordan Daniel Kuehl, Tomah

Whitney Marie Kuehl,

Tomah

Dresden John Lambert,

Cochrane-Fountain City

Heidi E. Strey, Osseo,

Fairchild

Colby Von Haden,

Tomah

Brooke Welke, Osseo-Fairchild



## Jeff Hicken Earns VIP Award Posthumously

Eleven individuals were honored with a VIP Citation during the National FFA Convention and Expo, held in Indianapolis, on Oct. 27-30.

The VIP Citation recognizes individuals' significant contributions to FFA and agricultural education.

Jeffrey Hicken, previously of Waupun, was awarded the VIP posthumously for service to the FFA.

He began his career in 1998 as an agricultural instructor and FFA advisor at Sauk Prairie High School. In 2003, Hicken was named Wisconsin High School Teacher of the Year. He was a recipient of the Wisconsin Association of Agricultural Educators Outstanding Young Member Award and earned the Herb Kohl

Fellowship Award for excellence in education.

He has held his most recent role with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction since 2006, which also included the duties of being the State FFA Advisor.

As the state agriculture education consultant, Jeff directed the training, certification and curriculum development for more than 300 agriculture teachers in Wisconsin.

For the past 15 years, he promoted agriculture education across the state and nationally by serving as a member of the National FFA Board of Directors. He served as a member of the National FFA Foundation Board of Trustees.

The VIP Citation honors the dedicated individuals who contribute to the FFA mission

of student success through their hard work and cooperation.

The National FFA Organization is a school-based national youth leadership development organization of more than 735,000 student members as part of 8,817 local FFA chapters in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

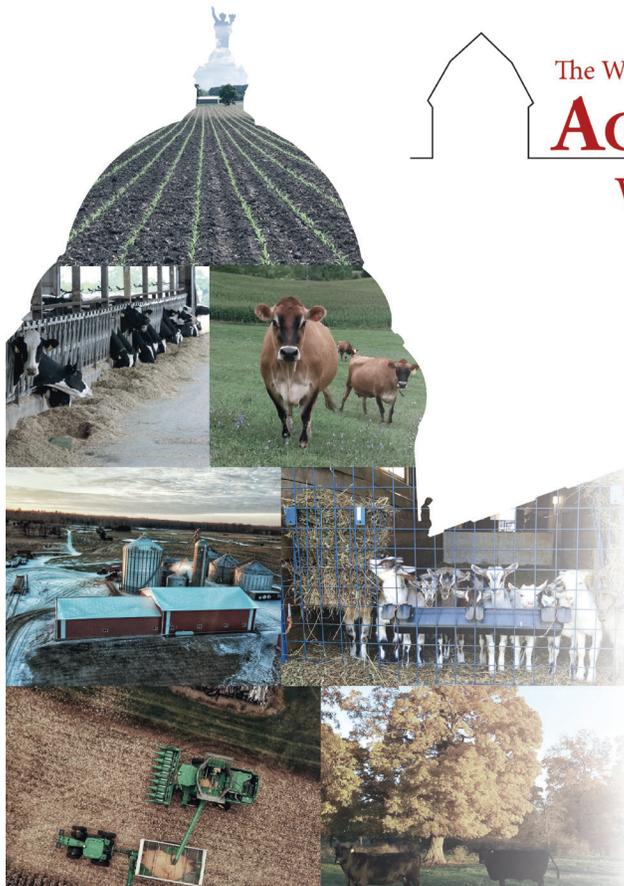
Jeff started his training in agri-science education as an instructor intern in the Trempealeau County community of Arcadia.

He helped to increase that department from a one instructor agri-science department to a two-instructor department with more than two hundred FFA members.

He is missed by his former students from that era.



Sherry Hicken received the National VIP Recognition posthumously for husband, Jeff.



The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation invites you to attend

## AG DAY AT THE CAPITOL

Wednesday, January 26, 2022

Monona Terrace Convention Center • Madison, WI

**Early Registration Deadline: January 19**

**Cost: \$30** per person by registration deadline.  
**\$60** after deadline and at the door.

### Tentative Schedule of Events:

- 11:00 a.m. Registration
- 11:30 a.m. Opening Program
- 12:15 a.m. Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Legislative Briefing
- 3:00 p.m. Leave for Capitol Visits

Presented by:  Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

Thank You to Our Sponsors:

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Due to Dane County ordinances for COVID-19 mitigation, masks and other provisions may be required for this event and details are subject to change.

## Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protections Visit

In celebration of National Farmers Day, Randy Romanski stopped at the farm of Joe and Noel Bragger to learn about conservation efforts the Bragger family have made on their diversified operation.

Secretary of the Department of Ag, Trade and Consumer Protection Romanski started by getting introduced to Bragger's trout, which have as their habitat the cattle water tank that is fed by a natural spring. It was the first example of how the operation works in symbiosis with nature. The field tour started with a view from the hilltop above where the trout were thriving.

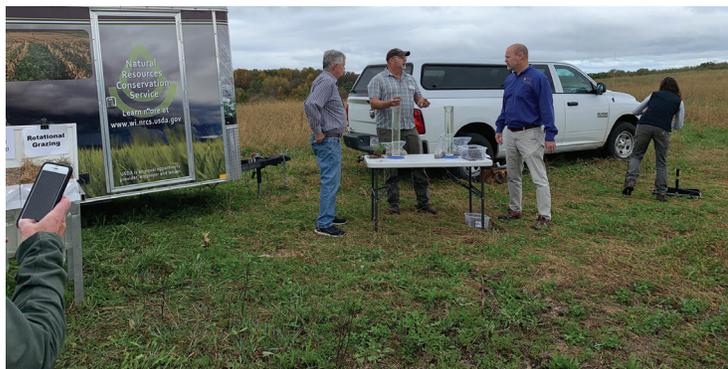
Bragger pointed out the edges of his woodland where he's quit planting crops. Instead, he leaves a grassy 30-foot buffer strip, allowing exposure for the fields and increasing yields. It also keeps the woods from creeping into the cropland because it can be mowed. Hay is made on the buffer strips.

After looking at Bragger's ridge fields, everyone watched a demonstration for Secretary Romanski using a rainfall simulator. With samples of silt loam, which is good soil, but extremely susceptible to erosion, the demonstration included simulating rainfall over five trays of soil.

Five samples were used to simulate different conditions.

- Conventional tillage, no cover crop, corn-soybean
- No-till with cover crop
- Forest
- Conventional tillage, spring
- Rotational grazing

The conventional-tillage samples showed run-off with no absorption.



After the demonstration each soil sample was tipped onto a tarp to show if the soil underneath the sample's surface was still dry. The cover crop, forest and rotational-grazing samples showed very little runoff of water, with most of the rainfall going into the soil.

Demonstrators explained the type of conservation works like a sponge for the water and the soil is porous, giving a place for water to go. Soil roots and good earthworm populations along with warmer soil temperatures make a soil that holds together yet crumbles apart.

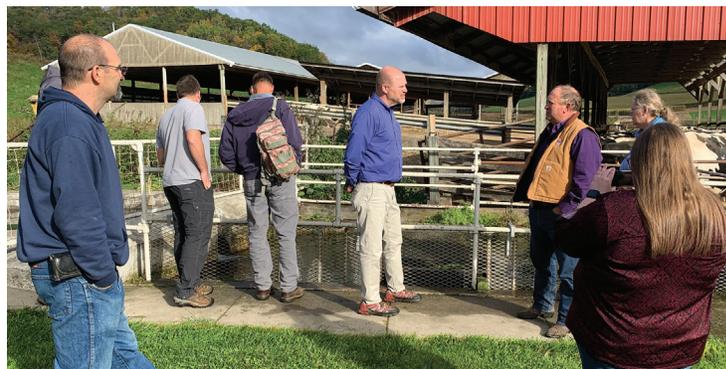
Bragger said he has seen this demonstration using different soils from other areas of the country and the results are the same.

Chemicals cause the most common soil disturbance and tillage is the second-largest culprit. The Natural Resource Conservation Service recommends four conservation points.

- Minimize disturbance
- Use cover crops
- Maximize living roots
- Maintain residues

Using those four principles, Bragger said with the family's 880 acres and a diversity of crops he is moving constantly. He pointed out farming isn't like it was when corn and beans ruled. As for the future of agriculture, he sees an increase in the use of drones for monitoring and applications. And he is planning to plant hazelnuts on his farm.

Secretary Romanski stated that agriculture continues to be the basis of Wisconsin's economy. No matter where people drive, they can see agricultural products being grown or being processed.



## Meet: Tim Wucherer, Buffalo County Resource Management Specialist



As soon as I could walk, I always had a fascination with the outdoors, especially with soil and insects (and any creepy-crawly-creature).

This love for nature strangely enough started with helping my grandparents with a trout hatchery in northern Wisconsin.

During our breaks from feeding and cleaning screens, I would explore the area for numerous grasshoppers on the ground to catch for bait for when we would go fishing off the dock along the Brule River in the late afternoon.

During my years in middle and high school, I was exposed to agriculture through the Holmen FFA Chapter and showing beef cattle at the Trempealeau County Fair as a Arcadia Hummingbird.

This pushed me to pursue a bachelor's degree in conservation from UW-River Falls and to earn a master's degree in entomology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Additionally, with my time in FFA and 4-H, I learned the importance of helping the community and continue to volunteer my time to put conservation on the ground or help others in need in the community.

For six years I have worked in Buffalo County Land Conservation Department helping farmers put conservation practices on the ground while in the process learning from the farmers themselves.

I also have helped farmers enroll in specific programs such as Farmland Preservation, Nutrient Management Farmers Education Grant and get involved in Buffalo County Conservation Farmers Producer-Led Group.

I also had the privilege to work with other partners such as UW-Madison Division of Extension in innovative projects such as planting new crops to add to a crop rotation.

Although I plan to continue my career in the conservation field in Eau Claire County, I hope to continue my work in Buffalo County and the Driftless Area and help the next generation in agriculture to become advocates for conservation.

## Meet the Agriculture Instructors of Buffalo and Pepin Counties

One of the strongest resources western Wisconsin has in agriculture is its tradition of strong agriculture instructors.

In this edition of the newsletter, we highlight these individuals and their programs.



**Name:** Scott Noll  
**School District:** Alma  
**Number of years teaching:** Business - 26, agriculture - 4  
**Tell us about your agriculture program:** When I got my experience ag license, we started with eight FFA members. Now, we are close to 30. We have several members who show at the Buffalo County Fair and many members who are very active on their family farms.

**Tell us about some activities your FFA chapter does/hosts:** We sell fruit, have had a meat and cheese sale when the farm economy was low and sold 350 bags of product. We have had donkey basketball and have attended many FFA events.

**What is your favorite part of being an agriculture educator?** Sharing my love of agriculture with the next generation.

**What is your favorite memory as a teacher and FFA advisor?** The local support our group had for donkey basketball and having a full gym was very overwhelming.

**Anything else you would like to share about your program and/or chapter?** I feel very lucky to be able to bring this program back to our community and have three of my own children as current members.



**Name:** Deanna Wiersgalla  
**District:** Cochrane-Fountain City School District  
**Year teaching:** First year teacher  
**Tell us a little bit about your chapter:** The Cochrane-Fountain City agriculture program prides itself on developing well rounded community members. Three years ago, the school remodeled the agriculture classroom to add an agriculture processing lab that has been immensely helpful. We also have a

greenhouse in which the horticulture class hosts a plant sale from start to finish. This sale has always been a big event in the community. We also have eight classes within the day allowing for a wide variety of courses to be taught including animal science, agriculture natural resources, agriculture business and much more.

**FFA activities:** The Cochrane-Fountain City FFA has a state FFA officer, which has been a great experience. In the beginning of October, we hosted a Fall Leadership Workshop that 15 schools attended. A few weeks ago, we worked with the county conservationist, Timothy Wurcherer, and Adam Foehringer, the county forester, to remove the invasive species Buckthorn from Angel's Buff in Fountain City. In October, we attended the National FFA Convention where we had two teams compete.

**Favorite part of teaching:** My favorite part about teaching is getting to know my students and seeing them have the 'lightbulb moment' when a concept has been challenging for them but suddenly, they understand the idea.

**Favorite Memory:** Making homemade apple cider with the agriculture processing class.

**Anything else to add?** Cochrane-Fountain City is my home school; I'm beyond happy to be back teaching in such a welcoming community.



**Name:** Shauna White  
**School District:** Mondovi  
**Number of years teaching:** Five  
**Tell us about your agriculture program:** In Mondovi, students can start taking agriculture classes and be involved in FFA in eighth grade. We offer a variety of courses for students to take including exploratory agriculture, animal science, horticulture, equine management, small engines, ag mechanics, metals I and II as well as wildlife and natural resources. We are an affiliated chapter, so we have 120 FFA members in our chapter. All students start with a foundational supervised

agricultural experience, and students work on their SAEs as part of their classwork in their agriculture classes.

**Tell us about some activities your FFA chapter does/hosts:** Some of our favorite activities are the annual Food For America event, Thank a Farmer Day, Spring Breakfast as well as our FFA Week events that include member Malt Day, Ag Olympics, Staff Breakfast and a tubing trip.

**What is your favorite part of being an agriculture educator?** Helping students find a passion for agriculture, even if they don't live on a farm.

**What is your favorite memory as a teacher and FFA advisor?** When the officer team entered the school talent show with an FFA-themed tik-tok and won.

**Anything else you would like to share about your program and/or chapter?** We restarted our alumni chapter two years ago and so far, they are doing a wonderful job.



**Name:** Kenzie Brantner  
**School District:** Durand Arkansasaw  
**Number of years teaching:** Two, first year in Durand

**Tell us about your agriculture program:** I'm fortunate enough to teach in a rural area where agriculture is very prominent and important.

Many students work or live on a farm and come in with a decent amount of agricultural knowledge. Right now,

I teach eighth grade agriculture, two sections of plant science, two large sections of animal science and one section of dairy science. I'm fortunate enough to have a greenhouse that my plant science class cares for. We are going to host a plant sale for the first time in a while this spring if everything goes as planned. Also, in my greenhouse, we have a small aquaponics system set up and I'm in the process of purchasing fish. I really like for my students to come in and learn on their own. I try my best (I know it will get easier as I continue to teach) to have a project-based learning approach to my classroom. The less teaching, I do and the more research and hands-on activities my students do the better. We got done with dairy science and instead of taking a paper quiz like I told them they were going to do; they drew the ruminant

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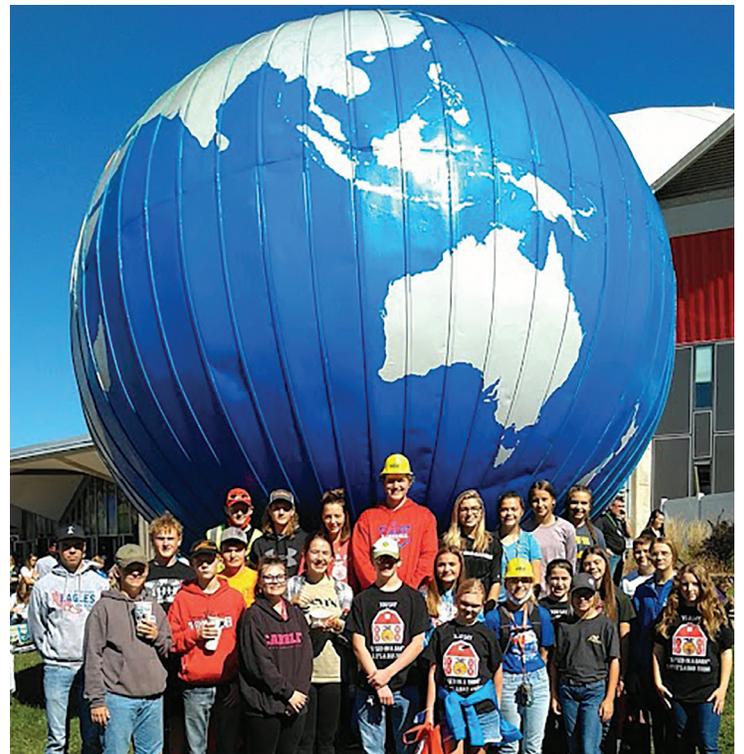
digestive system with window markers on their tables and answered questions orally when they were finished. I've taken over somewhat of a difficult program, but I've enjoyed the challenge and making it my own as we go.

**Tell us about some activities your FFA chapter does/hosts:** One activity we do that not many chapters do anymore is host a corn drive. FFA members go out into the school district, introduce themselves to farmers and ask for a donation of money or a donation of corn. If they receive corn, we take it to Alcivia and sell it. We come back and have lunch together in the ag room. We had our corn drive two weeks ago and made almost \$7,000. I'm proud of my members as they decided to donate \$4,000 of their fundraising. The Durand FFA Chapter has always been decently active in the community, but not so much within the state. I took members to the Fall Leadership Workshop in Mondovi and they absolutely loved it. It was great to see that spark for FFA be ignited in those members and I had even more kids sign up to go to the Impact and Mission Conference.

**What is your favorite part of being an agriculture educator?** One of my favorite things about being an agriculture educator are the students who walk through my door. Yes, they are challenging at times but the connections I make with them are always something I look forward to. I love being able to teach the kids who don't necessarily love school and would rather go out and work. They might complain about some of the things I have them do but they really are great students.

**What is your favorite memory as a teacher and FFA advisor?** Since this is my first year in Durand, I haven't made too many memories. So far, it was hearing one of my FFA members who was nervous about going to the Leadership Development Conference say, "That was really fun!" I also heard an eighth-grade student say, "This is my favorite class." It's the little things like that always make my day.

**Anything else you want to share about your program or chapter?** I graduated from Durand in 2013. Being back as the agriculture teacher and FFA advisor is something I never imagined would happen, but I'm very thankful that it did. I have a great community, and coworkers supporting me and the agriculture program.



Congratulations to Heidi Strey and Brooke Welke of Osseo-Fairchild FFA for receiving their American FFA Degrees.

## Training for Emergency Livestock Transport Response



By Lyssa Seefeldt, Extension Agriculture Educator

The UW-Madison Division of Extension is hosting a 'Planning for Emergency Livestock Transport Response' program (PELT-R).

This course has been designed as a hybrid model for you to work through content online, attendance at the orientation zoom and an

in-person, hands-on training day.

This course will be \$50 per registered individual. You can find the registration information at [bit.ly/PELTR](https://bit.ly/PELTR).

Physical locations for the in-person training day have not yet been determined for 2022, but Extension would like to know if you have an interest to help determine the best locations to offer.

The goal of this course is to provide resources you will use to better understand your area's emergency response to livestock transport incidents, especially if you are a farmer that may be asked to help when livestock incidents occur.

As a participant in the PELT-R program, you would work through the course content in the agreed upon time-frame at the start of the course. Course assignments will help you meet the goal so that when

you complete the course, you have a working knowledge of your role in responding to livestock transport emergencies.

The course sections include:

1. Welcome: Orients you to the class and how to use Canvas
2. Course Resources: A robust listing of additional resources that you may find useful in your planning process
3. Introduction and Livestock Behavior
4. Scene Assessment and Containment
5. Biosecurity
6. Extrication and Relocation
7. Euthanasia: Principles and Mortality Handling

Each section clearly identifies objectives for the module, provides foundations for building your plan and has knowledge checks to help the course planners make sure you are getting the information you need.

There also is a case study built into the modules to help you and your colleagues work through a practice scenario.

For more information on the course, or if you have questions about it, please contact me at 715.839.4712 or [lyssa.seefeldt@wisc.edu](mailto:lyssa.seefeldt@wisc.edu).

## Pulling Together Before Harvest

By Brenda Dowiasch, District Promotion and Education Chair

The Eau Claire County Farm Bureau hosted 'Pulling Together Before Harvest' on Sept. 12.

The Eau Claire County Farm Bureau Young Farmer and Agriculturist Program, was looking to host a fun event, that had not been hosted in the past.

Why not try something new with a trap shoot? Heather Erdman, Eau Claire County YFA chair, got busy planning the event at the local trap range.

Pulled pork sandwiches were provided and guests were asked to bring a dish to pass. There were beverage available for purchase at the range. Several games and were setup inside for the kids.

The goal was to get friends and families together before the busy fall season began.

Thank you to the Augusta Area Sportsmen's Club outside of Augusta for hosting. It turned out to be a great day and we had a blast shooting a couple rounds of trap.

Thank you to all the families that came out to make this event a huge success.



## Farm Bureau and FFA Alumni Select Jackson County Outstanding Farm

Pfaffsway Farms has been selected as the Outstanding Jackson County Farm for 2021.

Pfaffsway Farms is in Jackson County, two and one-half miles west of Alma Center on Highway 121. The farm is owned and operated by Steve and Kristin Pfaff and family, consisting of Casey and his fiancé Dakota, Olivia and Larissa.

The farm grows 900 acres of corn, soybeans and alfalfa. In 2020, the family purchased a neighboring farm, Stardome Farm, from the Stubrud family in order to expand the milking herd and increase acreage.

The original farm was purchased in 1964 by Steve's father William Pfaff. At the time, the herd consisted of about 125 head of cattle with 62 milking cows.

William and Marilyn had four children who were raised on the farm. JoDee, Terrance, Paulette and Steve.

Currently, there are about 400 head of registered cattle at Pfaffsway with 180 milking. The Pfaffs sell their milk to a fourth-generation family-owned cheese manufacturing plant., Lynn Dairy of Granton.

The feeding program consists of high moisture corn, haylage, corn silage, roasted soybeans and other commodities that are priced in at the time of purchase.

Steve and Kristin instilled a passion for showing dairy cattle in each of their children and it continues to be a hobby for the family to this day. The family has enjoyed showing registered cattle at local, regional and national shows during the past 20-plus years.

The eldest, Casey, holds a passion and skill for finding the most correct and balanced heifers in the herd and developing them into a solid string of show animals.

Pfaffsway has bred five Junior and All-American nominations and strives to continue breeding for excellent genetics in the herd.

Casey attended UW-River Falls and earned a bachelor's degree in dairy science. Upon graduation, he returned to the farm to work full-time, taking over herd management, calf care and overseeing field work. Casey and his fiancé Dakota enjoy raising their daughter, Isla, on the family farm



and look forward to growing and adding to the dairy operation's history in the years to come.

Larissa also attended college at UW-River Falls and earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture marketing communications. After graduation, Larissa began her career in Minneapolis working at an advertising agency specializing in food and ag communications. She continues to work with agriculture and food clients to help bridge the gap between farmers and consumers.

Olivia recently graduated high school and is becoming certified to be a lead teacher at a local daycare. Olivia has always had a natural passion of caring for children and has big goals of opening her own daycare facility that enables children to connect with the farm.

Kristin and Steve have a lot to be proud of – not only their farm, but with the kids they raised. The Pfaff family is proud to be part of an industry that helps feed the growing world. They look forward to growing and developing their operation to continue carrying on Pfaffsway Farms' family legacy.

# Monroe County

## Coloring Contest



### Age Groups:

3 & 4

5 & 6

7 & 8

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

*To participate, you must be a resident of Monroe County.*

Name:

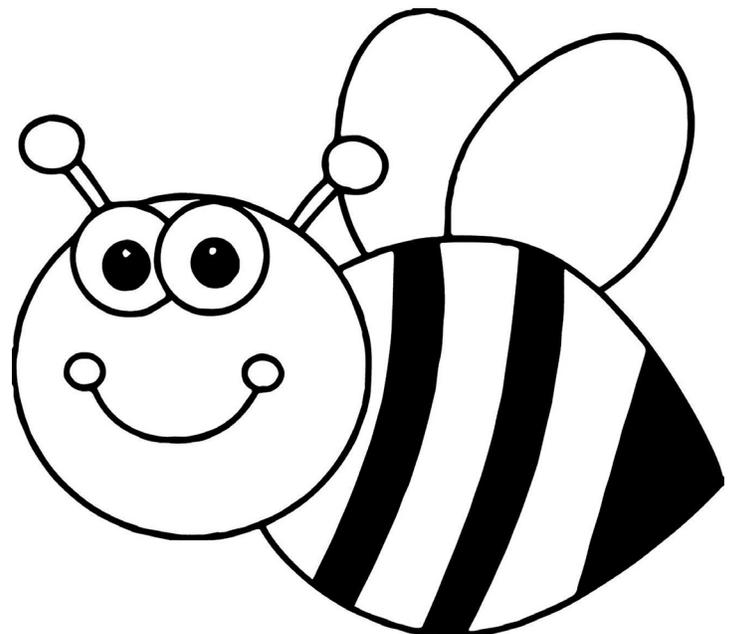
Age:

Address:

Phone:

Mail entries by Monday, Jan. 17, 2022, to:

Peggy Wright  
605 W. Wisconsin Street  
Sparta, WI 54656



## Resolutions, "Our Heart and Soul"



**Jack Herricks**  
Monroe County Farm Bureau President

Resolutions are the heart and soul of Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation.

It is the venue used to develop change for a situation that a member feels is not fair or right.

By definition, a resolution is the act of finding an answer or solution to a conflict, problem or situation for which a determination to change has been made.

As Farm Bureau members, we pride ourselves on being a part of a grassroots organization. When I think of roots, I think of the very start, the first beginning of life.

In our daily lives we encounter many different circumstances. Most of these circumstances we consider routine or normal. Every so often, we encounter a situation that we realize should be changed and improved.

If it is a situation that falls under the scope of WFBF policy, we can use the resolution process to develop a change.

The pathway of a resolution is lined with scrutiny and analysis.

First at the county level, then the district and if it survives these two levels it is once more put to the test by delegates at the state convention where it can be sliced and diced and hopefully put back together in a format that will be acceptable to the majority of voting delegates.

After gaining delegate approval, the resolution becomes a part of the WFBF Policy Manual.

The policy manual determines the pathway for governmental relations staff to follow.

Hopefully, this brief explanation of the process, will encourage us to bring about change in situations where it is needed.

Monroe County Farm Bureau has experienced the accomplishment of shepherding a resolution from birth to becoming policy in the American Farm Bureau Federation policy manual.

Take heart. It can be done.

## Trempealeau County

## Ag Promotion From a High School Student's Perspective



By Jescey Thompson

Hello, Farm Bureau. I am excited to introduce myself as your Trempealeau County Farm Bureau Agriculture Promotions and Education Chair.

You might notice a new face around the county and in some classrooms, well, that's me.

I'm Jescey Thompson, a junior at Galesville-Etrrick-Trempealeau High School, an FFA

member, agriculture advocate and most importantly a farmer at heart. I am excited to serve you and our local school districts. Please feel free to contact me at any time

The words from my teacher said it best, "People will ask you what moment changed everything, this is the moment you will tell them." Those words from a career long supporter of mine meant mountains. Farm Bureau has brought countless opportunities, but I am focused on advancing our Ag in the Classroom Program.

In August, I was elected and by the third week of September I found myself in my first class visit with Farm Bureau. Right after my election, I went to work. I started with an email to every fourth- and fifth-grade teacher, along with their administration and principal.

I expected prompt replies, but it was not like that. It was a great amount of effort to get into the schools, even if the teachers want it, there are obstacles. One thing I have noticed is you will get more attention when you make your visits public and exciting.

To Galesville Elementary I went. Although I have been to classroom visits before for previous events, workshops and National FFA week activities, I found this one to be extremely difficult. It was a highly active lesson and I was nervous, but we all learn from that, don't we? Next stop was Etrrick. A little background information, I hail from Etrrick, so I got to go into one of my old classrooms and it felt awesome. I was getting comfortable with the material and being in a larger class setting.

With a few class visits in between, I walked in the doors of the Whitehall School District. This time was different, though, I was



### Ag in the Classroom learning with no classroom needed.

confident in my abilities. About 55 students were at my lesson, where we talked about hereditary traits. This was the most comfortable I have been in a classroom setting.

Soon I found myself traveling the county from classroom to classroom and going on many tours, one with the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Randy Romanski.

Lots of hard work and determination had found me talking to important people and taking that knowledge to the classroom; I was gaining experiences and helping others learn from them. It felt extremely fulfilling to be able to see my hard work pay off, even though I am only two months into my term.

After all, being a member of the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau Board is one moment that I will tell people changed my path, direction and success. Getting into the classroom is what I am most excited about. If I could tell my peers one piece of advice, it would be to get involved. It might seem scary or intimidating, there is no doubt that it will be for a while, but it all gets better. Farm Bureau is a turning point in my life.

If you have thoughts, concerns or ideas, please contact me at [jescy104@gmail.com](mailto:jescy104@gmail.com) or 608.797.4188. I encourage you to reach out, it will help us grow our Ag in the Classroom Program.

As always, Farm Bureau Proud.

## Take It On the Road

How do you improve a Farm Bureau event that is one of the most popular activities of the county fair? An event that has decades of success. An activity that involves mature members, young farmers, board members and future members. A consistent fundraiser that has dedicated people supporting it each year.

You take it on the road.

This past fair season the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau unveiled its new milkshake sales stand trailer. A much anticipated change to the famous milkshake stands that have graced the Trempealeau County Fair for decades. Customers would line up 40 and 50 deep to get a chance at a dairy delight in the summer heat.

Years of success can take a toll on facilities. The Trempealeau County Farm Bureau Board of Directors realized that due to the age of the original building updates would be necessary to meet ever changing health guidelines. Along with that challenge was the ever increasing number of requests for milkshake stands throughout the county.

The challenge was met by the Farm Bureau board that in 2018, started to investigate how to solve the dilemma. Trempealeau County Farm Bureau President Shane Goplin toured different fairs and reviewed fundraisers in the area, extending around western Wisconsin and into Minnesota. His research led to the idea of going mobile with a turnkey trailer that could be set up in a short length of time and pass all health inspections.

The next problem to be solved was to offer customers more variety without increasing the workload on Farm Bureau volunteers. Shane's travels lead to the Minnesota State Fair, an event with a reputation for feeding many customers at a high rate of speed.

The solution exhibited by the Minnesota State Fair was to use soft-serve ice cream. Anyone who has worked at a milkshake stand knows the most laborious task is digging the ice cream out of the containers. Soft serve offers a high rate of speed along with consistent flavor that is mixed one time for more than 50 servings.

"The choice to go to soft serve was definitely a hard decision to make," said Goplin. "But in the end, it was what we, as a board, thought was the best going forward. We are now able to offer different size shakes. Before we could only use one brand, size and style of cup. We heard some positive feedback about offering two different sizes. This year, nearly 40 percent of our sales were the smaller size. I will admit we have some



learning to do with soft serve, but I believe we will be able to offer a more consistent product than before. Along with that is help to run the shake stand. I have talked with several organizations this year and they all are saying the same thing, it is hard to find people to fill a shift. Everyone's life seems to be busier than ever trying to catch up on the past year, and it is hard to find the time."

Advantages that are already self-evident include: More varieties available (chocolate, strawberry, vanilla, mint) more sizes of product, faster service and a whole lot cleaner environment to prepare food.

Another advantage is that it takes less people to work a shift. A business change made this year was the use of iPad to track the use of ingredients and numbers of milk shakes sold. The app was a step up for accuracy and allows more information for planning for year-to-year activities.

Challenges include: More time cleaning the soft serve machines and a larger investment in equipment than ever before with the original building.

The biggest change is that the Farm Bureau can take the show on the road. Recently, the trailer and Farm Bureau milkshake crew served hundreds of shakes to thirsty attendees at the Ashley for the Arts celebration in Arcadia. This art festival attracts more than 50,000 potential milk shake consumers, a market that is served by the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau.

Each city in Trempealeau County that hosts a festival offers a ready multitude of milk shake buyers that can support our dairy industry. All this activity is due to the grassroots willingness of the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau to take it on the road.

## Goplin Earns FFA National Proficiency Award in Ag Education



Trempealeau County Farm Bureau Director Kendra Goplin is a member of the Whitehall FFA Chapter.

She started her supervised agricultural experience (SAE) by helping teach third grade students about agriculture safety for an agricultural literacy program.

Goplin also is serving as the county Farm Bureau Promotion and Education Chair and directs Ag in the Classroom activities in area schools. She participated with other Farm Bureau

members in the Promotion and Education activities at the district level and worked in conjunction with other county board members.

Goplin assists in coaching a middle school quiz bowl team and creates educational displays at the county and state fairs.

She also coordinates ag literacy activities in her school district, reaching students from pre-kindergarten to sixth grade.



Goplin is supported by her parents, Melinda and Shane, and her FFA advisor, Melinda Goplin.

CHS and Harris Products Group-A Lincoln Electric Company sponsor this proficiency.

**This Issue Contains  
Highlights for:**

Buffalo County

Eau Claire County

Jackson County

Monroe County

Trempealeau County

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