



Grassroots

District 8 News

From the Milk House



Ryan Klussendorf

WFBF District 8 Director

As I reflect on the past few years, I think about the mountains I have had to climb, the valleys I have unexpectedly slid down into and the reason I continue to push forward with farming. I think about what

keeps me farming, what stops me from selling the cows and working in town. Where did my love of farming come from? My roots, they have been the strong ropes that support me, and hold me in place while I sway whichever way the wind takes me.

Every spring we plant seeds that grow incredible root structures to keep our crop healthy, maturing and standing tall. These plants and their root systems are so intricately connected that no plant could survive without its root system for support and nutrition.

The same can be said about the Wisconsin Farm Bureau. As we continue to grow and prosper, we need the support and nutrition from our members. Our roots, well Grassroots to be specific, the everyday people who make up our members. While you are hard at work on the farms and agribusinesses, you keep your eyes and ears open to the everyday struggles an agriculturalist may face. Advocating on these issues and passing along the knowledge to other countys and states is what makes our organization strong.

We have recently celebrated another annual meeting at Wisconsin Farm Bureau, we have listened to the delegates and adopted policies to help guide our organization into the future. This would not be possible without our grassroots, you the members who develop and bring policy forward for all to consider. As we continue moving forward at WFBF remember what you bring forth as a member is the nutrients our board and staff need to keep our organization healthy. Every member is crucial, every issue faced is important.

Our board and staff is not in every field across Wisconsin, we don't know every issue before it rears its ugly head. Like Eisenhower said, "You know, farming looks mighty easy when your plow is a pencil, and you're a thousand miles from the corn field." Members keeping their ears sharp at township board meetings, county board meetings, and even at the local bar establishments will keep our organization proactively engaging in these issues while they are on the table. Keeping the Wisconsin Farm Bureau strong starts with our roots.

Some Days You're Just Livin'



Ashleigh Calaway

WFBF District 8 Coordinator

It's no secret that I'm open about the trials and tribulations that I have overcome. I do this because if I can help one person see that they have already survived 100% of their bad days ... it's worth it.

A friend once said, I would rather spend three hours on the phone talking through things than 30 minutes listing to a eulogy, and I couldn't agree more.

I know in the agriculture community we are prone to just power through – heck I do it myself. I tend to not let anyone know my struggles until I have come out on the other side. I want you to know that you don't have to, that there is someone out there who understands, and wants to help, that we are all in it together.

I have always believed that music can have a direct impact on a person's mood – which is true. According to the AARP research shows that music can have a beneficial effect on brain chemicals such as dopamine, which is linked to feelings of pleasure, and oxytocin, the so-called 'love hormone.' There also is moderate evidence that music can help lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol.

This last spring, I created an album on my phone called 'Bad Mood.' To my neighbors, I apologize because I know there wasn't a nice day this summer, you didn't hear this album on full blast as I worked outside or when I took my husband's truck for a joy ride. Josh, if you are reading this, no you are not. It was in those moments that I felt like my old self, grateful for all that I had, and reminded of how blessed I am. I knew that it was going to be okay. With each replay of that album, I found myself getting better, smiling a little more, laughing a little bit louder.

Recently, I added a song by Dierks Bentley called "Living." I've noted a few of the lines and chorus that resonated with me the most.

Just know that you are never alone, that it's ok to not be ok, that it's ok to hop in the farm truck, crank up the radio and let your inner teenager out, no matter your age.

Living

*This mornin' I got up at 6:01
I walked out and saw the rising sun
And I drank it in like whiskey
I saw a tree I've seen a thousand times
A bird on a branch and
I watched it fly away in the wind
And it hit me
It's a beautiful world sometimes I
don't see so clear*

*Some days you just breath in
Just try to break even
Sometimes your heart's
Poundin' out of your chest
Sometimes it's just beatin'
Some days you just forget
What all you've been given
Yeah, some days you just get back
And some days you're just alive
Some days you're livin' (ooh) mm, hm
Some days you're livin' (ooh) mm, hm*

*Blue's a little bluer up in the sky
You're high's a little high
You feel that fire you've been missing
Some days you're living
It's a beautiful world sometimes I don't
see so clear*

*Some days you start singin'
And you don't need a reason
Sometimes the world's just right
Your clear eyes ain't even blinkin'
Got a heart full of grateful
For all you've been given*

Finalists Selected in WFBF's Inaugural 35 Under 35 Program

Thirty-five individuals have been selected as Wisconsin Farm Bureau's 35 Under 35 Award finalists. The award is presented by WFBF's Young Farmer and Agriculturist program in partnership with Insight FS.

The 35 Under 35 program recognizes the creativity and innovation of young farmers and agriculturists who are preserving agriculture through leadership in environmental, social and economic activities. This is the inaugural year of the program developed by the YFA Committee.

In the first year of the program, 60 innovative and deserving YFA members submitted video applications. Applications were evaluated for their involvement in one of five categories: Sustainable Future, Sustainable Environment, Sustainable Service, Sustainable Storytelling and Sustainable Self.

"It has been extremely exciting to see this new program come to life," said WFBF YFA Committee Chair Bob Nash "We were blown away by how many deserving YFA members were nominated and submitted applications. Congratulations to all the finalists."

The Sustainable Future category recognizes individuals who are setting up the next generation for success both on and off the farm. The finalists in the Sustainable Future category are Megan Daluge, Rock County; Livia Doyle, Iowa County; Sydney Endres, Columbia County; Amelia Hayden, Jackson County; Karoline Twardokus, Dodge County; Sammy Van Deurzen, Brown County; Leah Weninger, Washington County; and Abigail Winkel, Manitowoc County.

The Sustainable Service category recognizes individuals who help farmers improve and meet their goals. The finalists in the Sustainable Service category are Josh Gerbitz, Dodge County; Mitch Giebel, Juneau County; Trevor Jacobson, Iowa County; Katie Maier, Grant County; and Kyle Much, Waupaca County.

The Sustainable Environment category recognizes individuals who are good stewards of the land and their resources. The finalists in the Sustainable Environment category are Jason Behrend, Wood County; Joe and Kristin Birschbach, Fond du Lac County; Heather Erdman, Eau Claire County; Josh and Kristen Joseph, Richland County; Zachariah Kenneke, Manitowoc County; Adam Kolb, Manitowoc County; Ryan Ripp, Dane County; and TJ Roth, Grant County.

The Sustainable Storytelling category recognizes individuals who use their platform to share agriculture's sustainability successes. The finalists

in the Sustainable Storytelling category are Hannah Barthels, Racine County; Rachel Harmann, Door County; Stephanie Hoff, Dane County; Christa Hoffman, Shawano County; Kaitlyn Riley, Crawford County; Katie Schmitt, Dane County; and Andrew Zwald, St. Croix County.

The Sustainable Self category recognizes individuals that go above and beyond their community and employees. The finalists in the Sustainable Self category are Eldon Henthorne, Vernon County; Holly LaPlant, Door County; Kelly Oudenhoven, Outagamie County; Cameron Pokorny, Fond du Lac County; Julie Wadzinski, Barron County; Tammy Wiedenbeck, Grant County; and Nate Zimdars, Fond du Lac County.

"On behalf of Insight FS, congratulations to all the deserving finalists," said Insight FS General Manager Ben Huber. "At Insight FS, we are committed to protecting the environment, enriching the community and helping businesses thrive. These individuals exemplify these values, and we are proud to partner with Wisconsin Farm Bureau to recognize them."

Each finalist will receive an embroidered jacket sponsored by Insight FS. The top individual in each category will be announced during the WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference in December. The finalists also are invited to attend an exclusive networking reception during the conference.

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation is the state's largest general farm organization, representing farms of every size, commodity and management style. WFBF's YFA program is open to Farm Bureau members ages 18 to 35.

Insight FS is headquartered in Jefferson serving patrons in Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Insight FS is an agricultural cooperative with annual sales of \$450 million providing agronomy, energy, feed, turf and agri-finance products and services, as well as grain marketing. Insight FS is part of the GROWMARK System.

For more information, visit insightfs.com.



Congratulations to Jason Behrend, Wood County Farm Bureau member for being named a finalist.

Cranberries, Cranberries, Cranberries

Cranberry Learning, Inc., is a nonprofit education tool and cranberry career pathway guide.

Its mission is to share cranberry resources and connect viewers to the cranberry industry. With cranberry lesson plans for traditional and nontraditional K-12 classrooms we will direct students to cranberry industry careers. Cranberry Learning's vision is to develop a long-range plan for agriculture, cranberry farming, trades and other employment disciplines that jointly meet the needs of developing students, contributing toward a (cranberry) workforce succession plan.

Staff launched its first fundraising event during the 2022 cranberry harvest. They marketed cranberry merchandise on social media to raise funds to support cranberry resource development, such as video tutorials.

To view the latest video production, a North American Cranberry Harvest, visit www.cranberrylearning.com or click on Resources for classroom lesson plans, recipes and career spotlights. Watch for more Cranberry Learning activity coming in 2023.

Cranberry Harvest



**Scan here to watch
a short film on
Wisconsin's
cranberry harvest.**



Cranberry Learning

If you want to connect with Heidi Slinkman or Pam Verhulst, visit www.cranberrylearning.com/contact and if you want to support Cranberry Learning, Inc., through a financial donation, please send us your gift to: Cranberry Learning, Inc., 5697 State Highway 54 W, Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin 54495.

Ag Rescue Training

By Melissa Ploeckelman, National Farm Medicine Center Outreach Specialist

The sun was shining, the smell of cows and silage was in the air, and everywhere you looked you saw fire fighters, EMTs and first responders.

In this case, that was a good sign as every person there was being trained to respond to low frequency, high risk agricultural emergencies.

The National Farm Medicine Center and the Pittsville Fire Department collaborated to host the second annual Agriculture Rescue Training in a five-year series.

The event was held on Heiman's Holsteins and Heeg Farms, Inc. Emergency responders are familiar and well trained for incidents they see frequently, such as roadway incidents, carbon monoxide emergencies and structure fires; however, when the incident occurs on a farm, emergency personnel may face an environment not familiar to them, putting them and their department at increased risk for injury.

Farmers are eight times more likely to die on the job than the average U.S. worker. While incidents on the farm may seem rare, they are widespread, stressing the importance for rescue personnel to be prepared to respond to these types of emergencies.

The Agriculture Rescue Training is designed to equip first responders with the knowledge and awareness of farm hazards, how to pre-plan emergency responses to a farm and use specialized equipment and techniques to safely rescue someone involved in a farm emergency.

On Oct. 21-22, Emergency personnel attended live evening lectures and a full-day of hands on training at four of the five agricultural workshops: Equipment Extrication, Grain Bin Rescue, Silo Rescue, Farm Familiarization and Tractor Rollover.

In addition, the Life Link III Air Medical Transport helicopter landed at the farm to provide emergency personnel with an understanding on how to set up a landing zone, as well as how to coordinate on scene



information.

This event could not have been possible without the great sponsors: After All, Inc., AgroChem Kersia Group, Brand Safway, Dingersfire

Company, Doug and Diane Mundt, Hahn Transport, Hay Creek Companies, Heeg Farms, Inc., Heiman's Holsteins, Josh and Ashley Calaway, Life Link III Air Medical Transport, Lincoln Fire Rescue, MacQueen Emergency, Mark and Betty Yerke, Mid-State Technical College, Mike Biadasz Farm Safety and Education Memorial Fund, Minor Trucking, Pittsville Fire Company, S&E, The Andersons, The Marshfield

Clinic Foundation and the Auction of Champion Donors, The Marshfield Clinic Health System, Training Development Coaching, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation and Rural Mutual Insurance Company, and Wood County Central Fire Rescue Association.

More than 32 departments and organizations consisting of 73 personnel from around Wisconsin were in attendance at the training event.

If you are interested in attending a future Agriculture Rescue Training, visit AGRESCUE.org.

"When I see a victim of a farm accident, it's just like when it's someone from the fire service, even if I don't know them it feels like I do because they are like brothers to me. Anything I can do to help make the Ag industry safer I am more than willing to do." – Agriculture Rescue Training Instructor



District 8 News

Title Town – Let's Get Ready to Rumble

Ashleigh Calaway

District 8 Coordinator

On Oct. 1 we kicked off the 2022-2023 Membership Campaign. We also celebrated another year of membership success. I couldn't be more excited about how we ended the year.

For the second year in a row, we had a voting membership gain in our district; I am even more excited that as a state we had a voting membership gain as well.

I am asking that you join your county boards and myself in making it a three-peat. I don't think this has ever been done – and after nine years of working together, we all know that I am all about doing what hasn't been done before.

Membership work isn't as hard as it sounds – it can be as simple as referring a friend to your Rural Mutual Insurance agent or encouraging him or her to attend an event with you. There are always plenty to choose from.

This year alone we covered everything from a soil microbial health self-testing program (Soil Your Undies) to a four-week mini-series on mental health (Women in ag mini-series on juggling their self-care and their families), we even hosted an informational meeting on alternative energy and so much more. We have been actively planning for the coming year and we couldn't be more excited about what we have in store.

Membership is what drives Farm Bureau and Farm Bureau is primarily financed by annual membership dues.

As of Farm Bureau's membership year end, Sept. 30, 2022, there are 47,331 member families who belong to Wisconsin Farm Bureau, 22,664 of those are voting members.

Voting members are those actively engaged in agriculture, owners of farmland or providing services related to agriculture.

Associate members join to support agriculture and to use the member benefits offered by Farm Bureau.

By being a Wisconsin Farm Bureau member, you qualify for benefits and services that provide a range of options that respond to the needs of farmers, families and businesses in Wisconsin.

For more information about member benefits, visit wfbf.com/membership/member-benefits.

Congratulations to members in District 8.

So join the fun, ask about getting your own yard sign, and join us as we work to obtain three consecutive years of membership growth.



**SUPPORT
YOUR
LOCAL
FARMER.**



JOIN TODAY
wfbf.com



Congratulations to the following counties for hitting county membership goals:

Clark County: Voting AND total membership gain

Lincoln County: Voting gain

Marathon County: Total membership gain

Portage County: Voting AND total membership gain

Price County: Voting gain

Taylor County: Voting AND total membership gain

Wood County: Voting AND total membership gain

Thank you for being a member of your county Farm Bureau.

If you have questions about your membership dues, how to read your billing statement or if you know someone who wants to join Farm Bureau, please contact District 8 Ashleigh Calaway at acalaway@wfbf.com or 715.781.2306.

Sign up! **AG NEWSWIRE
AND
POLICY PULSE**



- ☒ Political updates
- ☒ Farm Bureau news
- ☒ Ag events
- ☒ Weekly updates

Policy Pulse

Stay up to date on the latest legislative news affecting you.
<http://bit.ly/PolicyPulseSignUp>

Ag Newswire

Sign up to receive a weekly update with the latest Farm Bureau, political and agriculture news directly in your inbox every Friday.
wfbf.com/communication/ag-newswire

LET'S GET READY TO RUMBLE... MEMBERSHIP EDITION

IT TAKES A TEAM!

"It Takes a Team" is the theme for the 2023 membership year. This year's membership campaign is pitting districts against each other head-to-head to see who can hit their membership goals.

Introducing the District 8 membership mascot:



If You Give an Activist A Cookie

Ashleigh Calaway

District 8 Coordinator

A few years back my daughter was obsessed with the book "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie". Recently, she asked to bring that book back into her library circulation. My favorite nighttime routine is listening to her read to me. It was shortly after the last round of her reading it I realized; that little mouse has similar qualities to the activists we are up against today.

"If you give a mouse a cookie, he's going to ask for a glass of milk."

We have a prime example of that right in our district. Two counties are dealing with water quality issues where member farms are blamed for contamination. With the most recent instance, the county board has already offered free Reverse Osmosis (R.O.) systems, clean and freely available water, as well as state-level grant funding to repair and replace wells to residence in the community. With all of that being offered.... that's not enough. They still want more. In this instance they are targeting a specific farm. A farm that has already adjusted hundreds of acres of farmland out of a corn rotation and planted alfalfa close to a village, in an area the residents consider to be a recharge zone for the majority of their wells. The group has made it clear that no matter how hard they work to improve their conservation practices they will continue to ask for more. It is not necessarily about clean water but more about stopping animal agriculture.

"When you give him milk, he" probably ask you for a straw."

What I have learned over the years is that activists like to pinpoint one aspect of agriculture at a time. Not that long ago activist groups found themselves struggling to win their battle at the county level. They then started targeting production agriculture at the town level. In some counties the towns are creating ordinances that limit operational hours of farming to 8 am – 5 pm, Monday – Friday, require specific odor plans, and much more.

"When he's finished, he'll ask for a napkin."

They are targeting concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs). They are blaming them for any water quality issues without taking the time to evaluate other reasons why their wells could have issues. I am sure some of you reading this are thinking, this would never happen where I live, I am here to tell you it can. I also understand that everyone has their

own views on CAFOs, but if you think about it – they are just an easy target. All the rules and regulations they must follow are clearly and transparent and they are audited and enforced at the state level. Their farm locations can be easily looked up and are often pinned on maps. Most of the ordinances they are trying to put into place won't impact a CAFO but rather the farms that aren't CAFOs.

"Then he will want to look in a mirror to make sure he doesn't have a milk mustache."

In other states right now, activists are targeting mink, releasing thousands of mink that then have to be disposed of. Their hope is to end the fur industry and once that happens, their focus will switch leaving those of us left in animal agriculture as the next potential target.

"When he looks into the mirror, he might notice his hair needs a trim. So he will probably ask for a pair of nail scissors."

In some parts of our state, mink farmers have established a telephone tree. They follow a standard operating procedure of communication if you see something, hear something, say something, repeat, until everyone is prepared. Those of us in the rural countryside need to do the same. This is why the local affairs program was implemented.

"When he's finished giving himself a trim, he'll want a broom to sweep up. He'll start sweeping. He might get carried away and sweep every room in the house. He may end up washing the floors as well!"

We need Farm Bureau membership and involvement to be as solid and formidable as the religion of activism is to the activists. We need to continue to grow and add one person at a time until we have a group of farmers/agriculturists standing together tackling the same issues with the same mission of protecting and preserving the industry we love. The only question is ... are you willing to stand next to your fellow farmers and help? Are you willing to say we have given out enough cookies. It's time we become proactive, it's time we start running for local office, it's time we start attending meetings/events, it's time that we say, "I stand with my fellow farmer."



Ag in the Classroom Announces New Logo

The Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Program announced that it is launching a new logo.

The new logo was selected to better align the program with National Agriculture in the Classroom. The new logo kicks off a rebranding process that will include an e-newsletter and a refresh to the program's website.

"Education is the center of Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom," said Ag in the Classroom Coordinator Beth Schaefer. "This new logo better connects our program with National Agriculture in the Classroom while also reflecting our core focus: education."

To explore the program's new brand, visit wisagclassroom.org. The Ag in the Classroom program is designed to help K-12 students understand the importance of agriculture.



The program is coordinated by the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with funding from the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation, other agricultural groups and a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

For more information, visit wisagclassroom.org.

Nitrate Isotope Testing: The Tool I Hope You Never Need

By Kim Bremmer, Clark County Local Affairs Chair



As the current political atmosphere fuels environmental activist agendas (often at the expense of farmers), the messaging of our assumed pollution, particularly nitrate contamination, is everywhere ... from news outlets to social media, to even our town and county boards.

But groundwater flow and chemistry are more complicated than what activists and regulators consider them to be. For example, groundwater generally moves very slowly. The groundwater beneath your land could be tens, hundreds or thousands of years old. It should never be assumed that nitrates come from your current agricultural practices.

One tool helping to bring science and truth to the narrative regarding nitrates is isotope testing. You can think of isotopes like a unique signature. Scientists can use specific molecules in water to determine the age of groundwater (think 'legacy nitrates') and whether a nitrate found in water originated from commercial fertilizer or manure.

Each source of nitrate contains very different nitrogen and oxygen isotope signatures. Imagine the possibility of better understanding the source and age of nitrates if nitrates are found in a water sample and then formulating a solution around those results.

Unfortunately, the testing isn't cheap, but if you find yourself in a situation where you need to defend yourself against activist allegations, it may be a tool worth looking at.

I applaud Kewaunee County for taking this important step in working with farmers to conduct a nitrate isotope study with Dragun Corporation, a third-party highly respected firm of environmental scientists and advisors.

The preliminary findings showed the average age of nitrate contamination in a specific village known for having high nitrates is 30 years old and none of the nitrate contamination at this point was generated after 2007.

Yet this shouldn't seem surprising to those of us in agriculture who understand how things change and improve ... we have changed crop rotations, we have improved plant genetics, we use more precision ag technology than ever before, we minimize tillage and we incorporate all sorts of best management practices each and every growing season.

Precision agriculture technologies in fertilizer and manure applications have certainly made us better. Markets and shrinking margins have made us better. Advancements in the agronomic and molecular approaches to improved nitrogen use efficiency continually make us better.

I look forward to future innovations that we can only imagine today.

Keep up the good work, and I hope you never need nitrate isotope testing to defend your farm.

Clark County Farm Bureau Scholarships Available

We are pleased to again be offering two \$500 scholarships to graduating seniors, college and technical college students pursuing a post-secondary degree.



Applications are due April 1st, 2023

Lincoln County



APPLY TODAY!

Lincoln County Farm Bureau

**SCHOLARSHIPS
AVAILABLE**

We are pleased to again be offering two \$500 scholarships to graduating seniors and first-year college and technical college students preference given to students pursuing a post-secondary degree in agriculture.

Applications are due April 1st, 2023



From the President's Mud Room

Melissa Yates

Lincoln County Farm Bureau
President



Those of us involved in the agriculture industry tend to wear multiple hats.

These hats are generally stored in the mud room with all the

other things we need to grab in a hurry as we run out the door.

Our house is no different. The mudroom is almost like your own little secretary. You can easily tell who is in the house, if there was a situation on the farm that day, and the reminder of things you need to get done yet.

This is also where I catch myself pausing and thinking about opportunities. It is where I noticed my husband's ragged old stocking cap that desperately needs to be thrown. When I asked him about it...he graciously reminded me it still has a lot of life left in it.

It was at that moment that I thought of all of you, our valued members. I thought about the time and dedication you put into your farms and the industry we love.

I thought about how you keep pushing forward to advocate for that same industry. How even when you are tired and run down, you keep moving forward, you never give up.

We recently wrapped up our goal setting for the county and I couldn't be more excited about what we have in store.

I hope that you join us this year, that you share your ideas for programming, your ideas for policy, your ideas for our county and most of all, I hope you join see how much we appreciate your membership.



Lincoln County Farm Bureau Promotion and Education Chair Mary Sosnovske has been hitting events throughout the county to share the wonderful benefits of consuming real Wisconsin dairy.

Marathon County

wfbf.com/about/counties/marathon
MarathonCountyFarmBureau

From the President's Desk

Josh Schmidt

Marathon County Farm Bureau President

Hello, from Marathon County Farm Bureau.

I want to introduce myself as the new Marathon County Board President. I have been farming my whole life having grown up in Jefferson County. I have been here in Marathon County for 20 years now. For the last nine years I have been only farming part-time having gone from full-time dairy to a small calf operation. I continued to stay involved in the

dairy industry working in the AI and DHI industries.

For a little over a year, I have been working in ag lending. This new position enables me to learn about and interact with Marathon County agriculture beyond dairy. Outside of agriculture, I have been involved with Wausau Metro Special Olympics as a volunteer for 19 years and coaching for about 12 of those years.

I continue to learn more about Farm Bureau every day and I'm looking forward to the challenge of following in the footsteps of the excellent presidents before me. Have a safe and blessed holiday season.

Meet Your Marathon County Farm Bureau Board of Directors

We ask that you join us in congratulating our new officer team members and committee chairs.

We encourage you to contact any of our directors or committee chairs and find out what we can do for you.

In early November, the board met and set its goals for the coming year. One of them being to highlight our agribusiness members. So, if you are in the agritourism business be sure to reach out – we would love to partner with you for our next event.

Committees

Promotion and Education Committee Chair: Heather Schlessler

Ag in the Classroom Committee Chair: Amber Cordes

Dairy Stand Committee Chair: Helen Traska

Local Affairs and Watershed Committee Chair: Kelly King

Scholarship Committee Chair: Will Litzer

Little Britches Committee Chair(s): Mike Borchardt and
Madison Borchardt

Policy Development: Bill Mueller

Young Farmer and Agriculturist Committee Chair: Vacant.

If interested, please contact Ashleigh Calaway at 715.781.2306.

Membership Committee Chair(s): Dwight Tolk and Keith Kreager

Executive Team

Josh Schmidt, President

Bill Mueller, Vice President

Will Litzer, Secretary

Dave Hannemann, Treasurer

Directors

Katie Zormoski

Nathan Utecht

Patrick Baecker

Kelly King

Dwight Tolk

Keith Kreager

Duane Schuh



(from left): Back row, Katie Zormoski, Nathan Utecht, Will Litzer, Kelly King, Dave Hannemann and Josh Schmidt; front row, (from left): Bill Mueller, Patrick Baecker and Dwight Tolk; not pictured: Duane Schuh and Keith Kreager.



CARD PARTY NIGHTS

Do you miss the good old days of playing cards at the kitchen table after milking? Do wish that you could play cards with a group of people again? Well, wish no longer and join us at the Homestead Restaurant for an evening of card playing.

No experience is necessary. The games we play will depend on the expertise of those that attend.

Cost: \$0, but feel free to eat dinner while playing a hand of cards

Location: Homestead Restaurant
162765 WI-52, Wausau, WI 54403

When: Quarterly on the second Wednesday of the month at 7 pm.

January 11th, 2023
April 12th, 2023



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Marathon County Farm Bureau

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

We are pleased to be offering three \$500 scholarships to graduating seniors and first-year college and technical college students pursuing a post-secondary degree in agriculture.



Applications
are due
March 1st
2023

Together We Stand or Together We Fall

By Jeff Dombrowski, Portage County Farm Bureau Local Affairs Chair



Recently, we have seen groups move into our communities across the state to advocate for stricter farming practices or to implement restrictions that make it almost impossible to farm. In some instances, these groups are taking the battle to the township, in others they are taking it directly to the county. In either instance farms of all sizes are feeling the impact of these groups.

I'm sure by now we have all heard what has been happening in Nelsonville. I contacted Brad Olson, a Polk Burnett Farm Bureau member. Brad Olson has been actively involved in addressing issues as they arise across his county.

We discussed some of the keys to successfully addressing issues at the local level. He noted, the most important thing is building your team. I'm here asking if you will join our team. If you will stand up alongside farmers and industry leaders to defend our right to farm. As Brad shared with me, "We can no longer sit by and wait for someone else to step up and fill those rolls. We know that those who are anti-agriculture are already doing that. They are pushing their own agendas, no matter what the implications are on the local level. We know that if we don't stand up and speak, we will continue to fade into the background. We will continue to have to make concessions on things we don't want to. We need people like you and me working together to share the truth about agriculture. To band together and advocate for policy that will continue to allow us to be prosperous."

I have one simple question; will you join us? Join us in advocating for industry, livelihood and people who we love. Will you stand up and speak out with us to ensure that the next generation has a chance to farm? If so, please contact me and we can work together to make a difference on the local level.



Portage County Farm Bureau

SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

We are pleased to offer a \$500 scholarship to graduating seniors and first-year college and technical college students pursuing a post-secondary degree in agriculture.

Applications are due April 1st, 2023



Price County

wfbf.com/about/counties/marathon
MarathonCountyFarmBureau

PRICE COUNTY FARM BUREAU

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

WE ARE PLEASED TO AGAIN BE OFFERING SIX \$500 SCHOLARSHIP TO A HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR, A STUDENT CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN AN APPRENTICESHIP/TRADES PROGRAM, OR A TWO- OR FOUR-YEAR PROGRAM STUDENTS PURSUING A POST-SECONDARY DEGREE PREFERENCE GIVEN TO THOSE PURSUING A DEGREE IN AGRICULTURE.



APPLICATIONS ARE DUE APRIL 1ST, 2023

Color your favorite dairy item(s).



Price County Farm Bureau

From the Presidents Desk



Rob Klussendorf

Taylor County Farm Bureau President

2022 year is coming to end, looking back at what we have accomplished in the last year, I couldn't be prouder.

Last year, we submitted six of our resolutions to the state and were able turn five of them into WFBF and AFBF policy. I want to personally

thank you for bringing positive resolutions forward.

During our winter board meetings, we invite our state legislators to join us. We use this time to advocate for a policy that is important to our members and hear firsthand the concerns our representatives have.

In May we hosted our annual steak and egg breakfast. This breakfast has allowed us to sponsor our first scholarship opportunity for area youth. We also use this event as a beef promotion in conjunction with National Beef Month.

In May members also visited fourth-grade classrooms across the county to share their role in the agriculture industry.

I am proud to note that Taylor County Farm Bureau was also involved with 'COWS' (Celebrating Our Wisconsin Specialties). We partnered with members in the community to give 15-minute presentations on their area in agriculture. We covered everything from dairy and beef farming to nutrition work and even tractor repair.

We once again helped sponsor the Dairy Dessert Contest, sponsored a barn at the fair and worked in the Ag Venture Tent.

We didn't stop there either. We helped support district wide initiatives and programming. We were a part of the 2022 Energy Summit, Soil Your Undies Contest, Dairy Growth Management meetings and a livestock handling course for first responders/law enforcement.

I also had the opportunity to attend the statewide Agriculture in The Classroom training and Promotional and Educational Boot Camp. Ag in the Classroom training was quite informational and to hear firsthand the exciting new things that are on the horizon. We tackled everything from revitalizing an old program to building a whole new program, and everything in between. I walked away feeling excited about the possibilities for the coming year and I hope that you join us on this adventure.

Find Your Why and Never Look Back

Rob Klussendorf

Taylor County Farm Bureau President

My entire life people have always asked me why? Why do you volunteer so much of your time in the agriculture industry.

It's taken me longer than I care to admit answering that question.

When I think about education, promotion and lobbying I look at it as just sharing information that is important to you. I love watching students' eyes light up when talking about what we do as farmers and agriculturists.

To hear firsthand when our elected representatives understand why you are so fired up about an issue.

I understand opening your farm to the public can come with some headaches but, I firmly believe the positive impacts of it out way any challenges. Doing so allows us a unique opportunity to show how much we care for our land and animals.

Education has always been a key component of everything I do. Coming from a long line of school board members and educators. Growing up, I learned the value of volunteering firsthand. Our farm was always open for public events, meetings with elected officials and various promotional events.

Over the years, we have provided numerous people with the opportunity to milk a cow for the first time, including a U.S. Senator.

If you are ever interested in sharing your farm or work in the agriculture industry with other, please feel free to reach out to me. Together we can create a ripple effect of better understanding where food comes from, who and how it is grown.

We have opportunities for everyone, even if it's just an idea you want to share. You can send it to rflklussendorf@gmail.com.

Taylor County Farm Bureau

**SCHOLARSHIP
AVAILABLE!**

Taylor County Farm Bureau will be awarding a higher education scholarship to one (1) high school senior a student currently enrolled in an apprenticeship/trades program, or a two - four-year program

Visit <https://wfbf.com/about/counties/taylor/> for an application.

Deadline to apply is April 01, 2023.

From the President's Tractor Cab



Bruce Pankratz

Wood County Farm Bureau President

On behalf of the Wood County Farm Bureau Board of Directors I want to thank you for being a member.

In August, we wrapped 98 years of Wood County Farm Bureau and welcomed four new directors. Join us in welcoming the following

new board members: Heidi Slinkman, as the Promotion and Education Chair, Jenna Okonek, as the Ag in the Classroom Coordinator, Carly Knutson, as the Young Farmer and Agriculturist Chair, and Mike Gardner as a director.

As we look forward to planning another great year – we would love to hear from you and what you would like to see.

As a board we have some big things planned including getting Greta the Incredible Milk Cow out and about more, continuing with our summer picnic and #FarmerTalk series.

We hope that you join us for these events and many others we are planning.

I am excited to be serving as your new county president and look forward to hearing from you.



Have "ewe" heard the news?

Wood County Farm Bureau

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

We are pleased to again be offering scholarships to graduating seniors and first-year college and technical college students. A total of \$2,000 will be divided among two to four applicants, at the discretion of the scholarship committee, with no less than \$500 awarded to one applicant.

Applications are due April 1st, 2023

From the Cranberry Bog

By Heidi Slinkman, Wood County Promotion and Education Chair

November is a month we wrap up harvest and begin to reflect on the season. It's a time of year when we begin to plan holiday feasts and lots of togetherness.

So too, did I this month as I cut the last cranberry harvest crew payroll and served the last hosted harvest lunch. Without hesitation, attending the Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Boot Camps for Ag In The Classroom and Promotion and Education was great timing to step away from the farm and reconnect with other like-minded farmer people.

Ag in the Classroom was a terrific introduction for me as a newly joined Wood County Farm Bureau Board member. I have a passion to serve others, especially with education and future career development for the next generation.

It was a joy to experience learning about agriculture that isn't cranberry-centric and how it can be taught to a classroom student base. I made hand-crafted ice cream in a bag for the first time and what a hoot. I see adding 'How to Make Cranberry Ice Cream' to a cranberry-themed lesson plan in my future.

Promotion and Education Leadership Boot Camp for Mastering Today's Ag Marketing the following day was a wonderful opportunity to network with other 'boots on the ground' ag enthusiasts like myself. This was a media training type of workshop, hosted by a panel of Farmer Ag-vocates who offered our group tremendous tips for starting an onsite farm store, e-commerce tips, governing formalities, social media dos and don'ts and other digital marketing references. This Boot Camp helped provide a guide to Farmer Advocacy through information sharing/opportunities to engage with consumers & how you can serve the farmer community through the ever-evolving technology avenues. I'm looking forward to maximizing my marketing/communications/public relations efforts with the help of Farm Bureau's Farmer Marketing experts, who I now call friends.

Wishing you all a blessed Holiday Season and remember to pack your freezer with loads of cranberries until the next round of fresh fruit is picked next harvest.



Front row (from left): Jerry Minor, Pittsville Fire Chief, Charlie Fox, Amy Sue Vruwink, Heidi Slinkman, Carly Knutson, Jenna Okonek, Bruce Pankratz and Loren Scheunemann; back row (from left): District 8 Director Ryan Klussendorf, Mike Gardner, Bryan Haumschild and Dale Behrend; not pictured Josh Calaway.



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