



Grassroots

District 4 News

Statewide Sustainability Tour in District 4

Rachel Gerbitz, the Director of Sustainability Communications and Partnerships for Wisconsin Farm Bureau, organized a tour of the Bush Brothers bean processing plant as part of the Leaders of the Land Sustainability Tour Series. A nice group of farmers, leaders, WFBF staff and neighbors got a chance to see how Bush Brothers addresses sustainability at the commercial level. The group was able to see an anaerobic digester in action along with the reuse of water post-processing in crop production. Methane reclamation and use to generate electricity was a large part of the process. The electricity is sold back to the power grid to supply power to over 500 homes.

The tour, which was held October 20 in Augusta, highlighted the processing of beans at the plant through an intensive audio and visual presentation that demonstrated resource use and conservation. Rachel Gerbitz

arranged the tour and handled specifics for members to get a full view of sustainability in action. This activity was the culmination of the Sustainability Tour that has been offered over the past two years.

"It takes all of us to meet our sustainability goals," WFBF President Kevin Krentz said. "From farmers to food processors to grocery stores to the dinner table, we can all work together to protect our environment and preserve our resources. This tour series highlights those efforts throughout the food supply chain."

Farmers came from Eau Claire, Buffalo and Trempealeau County Farm Bureaus. The activity concluded with a lunch that was hosted by Fosters Fireside. A big thank you to all involved who made the activity so successful.



A group shot of the members that toured Bush Brothers Beans in Augusta.



Bush Brothers has plants in Augusta, Wisconsin and in Tennessee.



Members chat while awaiting the tour to begin.

Heather Erdman Represents District 4 on Advocacy Trip

Heather Erdman, newly elected District 4 Young Farmer and Agriculturists Chair, recently attended the advocacy trip to our nation's capital. Heather is a recent graduate of Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Leadership Institute and used skills developed in training to tell agriculture's story to our legislative leaders.

WFBF Young Farmers and Agriculturist members met with Wisconsin's congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. to discuss issues impacting agriculture on September 13. Issues discussed included Waters of the U.S., Federal Milk Marketing Order reform and the upcoming farm bill.

The September 11-15 trip was available to Farm Bureau members active in the Young Farmer and Agriculturist Program. The program provides members between the ages of 18 and 35 with an opportunity to enhance their leadership skills while networking with their peers.



"This trip allowed me to see our grassroots organization in action," said Iowa County Farm Bureau member Megan Yager. "Visiting with our lawmakers drove home the importance of our Farm Bureau membership and involvement."

A visit to the Brazilian Embassy on September 12 included an overview of the country's agricultural commodities, export markets and their focus on sustainability initiatives. They also met with other state Farm Bureaus for a presentation by the National Pork Producers Council.

The 21 young leaders met with Senator Tammy Baldwin, Senator Ron Johnson and their member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

"It was nice to see agriculture represented at the national level," said Wood County Farm Bureau member Jason Behrend. "It was impressive to see the power we have when we all come together as Farm Bureau members."

District 4 Discussion Meet and Policy Meeting

August 10 was an evening filled with intelligent discussion in District 4. Revolution Coffee in Black River Falls played host to the Young Farmer and Agriculturists Discussion Meet. The contestants were Allison Bragger, Andrea Schlais, Erica Gentry and Dylan Powell. The four YFA members from four different counties (Monroe, Jackson, Buffalo and Trempealeau) discussed the topic: Production agriculture requires a lot of capital. Young farmers and ranchers face challenges gaining access to the capital to start or grow their operations. What tools are currently available and what new programs could be introduced to help young people access financial resources-and make sound financial decisions to run their farms and ranches?

The contest included an 30-second opening statement, 25 minutes of open discussion and a 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 practical experience in dealing with resource management. Discussion centered on the most practical and best ways to get money into agriculture. The closings included action terms to how the ideas could be put into motion.

Judges for the evening included: Nathan Kling, Organic Dairy Farmer; Brenda Dowiasch, USDA Clark County Farm Service Agency; and Shane Goplin, Wisconsin Corn Growers. A big thank you goes out to these judges for their donated time. The three selected to

move on and compete at the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting include Erica Gentry, Andrea Rippley and Allison Bragger.

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 main ideas. Many of them reflected technology applications to the agriculture industry including foreign ownership, finance and the impact on the use of energy. 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 state delegates at the annual meeting. The resolutions that pass with majority votes will be published in the 2024 Farm Bureau Policy Book adopted by the 104th delegates of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation.

Captions:

1. Our discussion meet judges were (L to R) Brenda Dowiasch, Nathan Kling, Shane Goplin.
2. Allison Bragger makes a specific point about raising capital.
3. (L to R) Andrea Schlais, Allison Bragger, Dylan Powell, Erica Gentry competed at the District 4 Discussion meet.
4. A Large Group met to work on policy.



Wisconsin Farm Bureau Hosts 2023 Advocacy Campaign Training

Wisconsin Farm Bureau, with the assistance of American Farm Bureau, hosted an Advocacy Campaign School on October 11 and 12 at the state office in Madison. The event educated on developing and running a successful campaign for community leadership. Participants ranged from individuals currently seeking office to Farm Bureau members considering leadership roles someday.

Initial topics included campaign strategy, what it takes to be a good candidate, how to develop themes, how to speak to potential donors, recruiting volunteers and general information on voters. A large part of the introduction was how to speak to media. Common sense was emphasized, but many keys to success were given.

Specific details for the presentation of pamphlets, radio and election signage were given even down to recommended colors. Each Campaign School student received an instructional kit to put the suggestions they were given into practice. The kit contained organization methods, structure and tried and true tactics.

Mike Sistak, an experienced campaign manager from Arizona, presented the two-day workshop. He currently serves as AFBF's Director of Advocacy and Political Management. He has 9 years of experience in advocacy along with being involved with the high-level campaigns of Mitt Romney and John McCain.

A highlight of the school was the simulated campaign that each member was able to participate in. Members worked in groups to make decisions which were imported into a simulation program that gave public

response. The WFBF school participants in each group were elected by the simulated voters.

A past participant who attended the school in Montana went on to become the Montana Farm Bureau Federation Rookie of the Year Award winner and eventually was elected as Representative Russ Miner for the 2023 legislative session. He attended campaign school in both 2020 and 2022 to gain the knowledge and skills needed in become a successful legislator. Representative Miner was an active advocate for agriculture during the 2023 session and is known for being willing to put in the work and take the lead on many issues.

When asked about how MFBF's Campaign Training Seminar helped him, Russ was quick to say that the seminar was invaluable to him and his wife both times he attended. Representative Miner went home feeling prepared and confident in his journey to the state capital. He cited the value of hearing from experienced legislators and getting prepped for the press with mock TV and radio interviews. He also noted that the seminar is very successful in creating candidates who are elected to office and continue to serve for many years.

In 2022 the AFBF Campaign School enjoyed an 87% success rate in getting candidates elected to office. The school has been around since the early 1980s and enjoys a cumulative rate of election of over 80%. WFBF plans on hosting this event in the off-year election cycle. The tentative date for hosting the next class will be in 2025.

District Policy at Work in District 4



Kyle Danzinger

District 4 Policy Chair

“Grassroots organizations rely on active membership. Those members are the lifeblood of the organization, and it is THEIR organization to move forward. Farm Bureau meets the definition of grassroots; “ordinary people regarded as the main body of an organization’s membership.” We,

as ordinary people, come together every year at annual meeting to move our organization forward through fellowship, educational opportunities and, maybe most importantly, policy development. It is us coming together to discuss policy that makes our organization strong and moves our industry forward.

As active members we educate, debate and vote to move our goals and values forward. As policy writers, idea generators or content specialists, we come together to build our platform, so our representatives know how we feel about different topics. So how does this all work? I’m writing this as somebody who has been in the organization for a decade, somebody who’s been farming for my whole life and, lastly, I’m also wearing my Policy Development Committee Member hat.

I volunteered to write this short article to help some members better understand the policy creation side of our organization. I’ve been on the Policy Development Committee for about 18 months representing District 4. Policy Development Committee members serve a 2-year term. Our work runs year-round. My first responsibility began in Spring of 2022. We sat down and listened to issues potentially impacting agriculture and rural Wisconsin. Our group listened to issues and made decisions about what we wanted to share with Farm Bureau members, those are called the “White Papers.” These are good topics that some of us don’t think about, but they may impact our livelihoods. The goal is to get people thinking about how our policy can help the people of our organization and if, or how, our policy must change.

The next stop along the way is our district meetings. District 4 met in Black River Falls and discussed issues impacting our Western Wisconsin communities, Wisconsin rural life or, on the biggest scale, federal issues. We share ideas, start thinking about policy and what we want to modify, add or subtract. We then take our ideas from that meeting and bring them to our local county annual meetings. We talk about ideas and then mold those ideas into short resolutions. We vote yay or nay after discussion and possible amendments to get it just right. Once approved at the county level it goes to the Policy Development Committee.

This is the second to last step. As a committee we meet and look over all the resolutions that have been sent in. We organize the resolutions and make sure they align with the purpose of Farm Bureau. We also ask for clarification, discuss and ultimately vote to see if a resolution makes it into the proposed policy book that the membership delegates discuss and vote on at the state meeting. The important thing to remember is that we are NOT writing laws, we are providing a platform for our organization to stand on when it comes time to talk with our elected officials about proposed laws or law changes.

What happened to the resolution my county submitted? I see it didn’t make it through the Policy Development Committee and make it into the book? Did it die? Is it gone forever? NO, you can still bring it back at annual meeting. If you’re concerned your resolution didn’t make it into the book, ASK your District Representative (me for District 4) and we’ll let you know why. If you still want to have a conversation on your resolution at the annual meeting talk with your District Policy Development Representative (me), County President (Joe) or District Board Members (Brenda, Ed, Derek, Todd, Nathan or JJ), or your District Coordinator (Kevin). Resolutions may not advance for multiple reasons. Maybe it’s redundant, illegal, discriminatory, or maybe the Policy Development Committee doesn’t understand it, so please communicate so everybody can see why it is important and your voice is heard in this grassroots organization.

Speak Up!



Joe Bragger

District 4 Director

“Speak up, be heard, if you don’t say a word everything will stay the same!” – unknown author

There are so many opportunities presented to us each and every day to say and do something that can quite possibly change things for the better.

Speaking up can be as simple as telling a child something to keep them safe or as big as changing the outcome of a piece of important legislation.

Before I go further on this topic of SPEAKING UP, I would like to thank everyone for all that you do every day, giving your time and talent towards farming or agriculture efforts. Through the tireless efforts we all put forth, no matter the weather, economy or the personal stress of everyday life, our passion shows.

Even after all the involvement, we still find the time to share the last drop of energy to serve our communities in so many ways. We give our time to help volunteer at schools, county fairs and towards overall involvement in local government. We give our talent, knowledge and experience to help ensure that the next generation can be successful. We give generously to the things we believe in both individually and collectively by working a shift at one of our Farm Bureau stands or other

activities. Thank you, Thank you!

We have once again seen through this year’s drought and low dairy prices that we have little control over the weather or markets. We do, however, have control over our thoughts and voices and we have to speak up more than ever. It seems each year we have less control. Consider dairy for a second, for years we have been against any supply control yet today many if not most processors have somewhat of a quota or production limit in place. Deductions and PPDs have stolen billions from the nation’s dairy farmers yet we grumble but seldom really speak up. Think of regulations and mandates on our livestock handling such as the pork proposition in California. We remain afraid of stepping outside of what we are accustomed to and trying something else, yet we know that change is happening all around us. We need to speak up and be in control of change. We need to lead the change, not follow it.

Your attendance at your annual county Farm Bureau tells me that you know the importance of the policy work that we do and demonstrates that your voice matters. Thank you for sharing your time and talent by speaking up.

“Change happens when enough people speak up in the same voice!”
Unknown Author

Message from the District 4 Coordinator



Kevin Whalen

District 4 Coordinator

John Wooden, coach of the UCLA Bruins, set all-time records including four perfect seasons of 30-0, 88 consecutive victories, 38 consecutive NCAA tournament victories and ten National Championships including seven in a row. He accomplished 885 wins out of about 1100 games.

Wooden evaluated what his players did after each game, but also always evaluated what he did as coach. His pursuit of perfection was nearly attained. We can learn from looking at what we do each day and compare it to what our "perfect" situation could be.

People could ask, "How does being involved with groups of farmers make you closer to perfection?" Let's look at it through self-evaluation. First, look at management. My ability to get things done when needed and to a level that ensures success. How do I learn to do this? The same way farmers have learned through the years. We look to older farmers or

people with experience in the challenge we are undertaking. We attend activities where they share their wisdom, question them on specifics and try to emulate their actions.

Second, we look to make continuous improvement by maintaining relationships with people who share our conviction of being successful food producers. We support friends in their time of need and share our victories by joining together in social activities that allow us to continue traditions that our rural heritage is built on.

Third, we maintain our support by building a strong tie to our families and supporting our church or religion. As humans, we need to have individuals that we can rely on when times get tough. Most of the time daily work comes first, but in crucial times our soul needs to be fulfilled by the support others give us.

I am proud of the fact that all that I have listed is tied to Wisconsin Farm Bureau. As an organization, we are self-evaluating how we handle the attainment of perfection. Our Family Feedback sessions allow self-evaluation of the very group that can help all farmers reach their "Farmer Perfection."

District 4 Promotion and Education Update

Brenda Dowiasch

District 4 Promotion and Education Chair and Eau Claire County Farm Bureau President

It was an educational packed two days at the Volunteer Rally and Leadership Boot Camp. Farm Bureau members traveled to Fond du Lac to partake in training for Ag in the Classroom and to learn more about storytelling strategies from a great lineup of speakers.

Day One: Volunteer Rally

We kicked the day off with presentations from the 76th Alice in Dairyland, Ashley Hagenow. She shared about some of the new programming that they have been doing around the state. Members shared how they run the programs in their counties and shared tips on how to contact schools. The Ag in the Classroom Book of the Year is "I Love Strawberries." We heard from Ag in the Classroom Coordinator, Beth Schaefer, about the book and some fun activities to share with students. We ended the day with some hands-on activities and materials that were provided to take back to our local communities.

That evening we were invited to a dinner and tour of LaClare Family

Creamery, which specializes in goat cheese and is located in Malone.

Clara Hedrich, District 6 Promotion and Education Committee member, shared about how they grew their farm from two goats to a family-owned and operated business. Dinner highlighted some delicious goat cheese. We toured the facility and even got to pet the baby goats.

Day Two: Leadership Boot Camp

We learned more about Storytelling that Sells from Lady Farmer, Darci Daniels. Darci shared her story of raising her family, farming and running a small business. The 35 under 35 finalists, Hannah Barthels, Rachel Harmann, Stephanie Hoff and Kailyn (Riley) Kesler, shared how they tell their stories about agriculture. There was a good discussion with the members that attended the meeting.

Cassie Sonnentag shared updates from Gather Wisconsin. We explored some of the highlights from the website and we provided ideas on how to share them at local and community outreach events. We worked together in small groups to make plans for the upcoming year.

If you would like to learn more about Ag in the Classroom, the book of the year or other educational activities, please reach out to learn more.



A large crowd met near Fond du Lac for the Volunteer Day in Ag in the Classroom and Bootcamp. The 76th Alice in Dairyland kicked off the day with a presentation.



Promotion and Education Chair Brenda Dowiasch and newly elected YFA Chair Heather Erdman at the Volunteer Rally and Boot Camp.

Buffalo County Annual Meeting Held at Rippley Hall

A large crowd was welcomed to the new Rippley Hall on the St. Boniface campus for the Buffalo County Farm Bureau 2023 Annual Meeting. The new building worked well to house our members with a great meal served by Roger Kamrowski's catering.

Ed Rippley began by leading the members in the pledge of allegiance. He continued the program by introducing the guests in attendance. The members of the board of directors introduced themselves.

The highlight of the evening was the address by Rural Mutual Insurance Company Chief Executive officer and Executive Vice President, Dan Merk. Laurie Peterson, District manager followed with input from the local level. The 2022 Annual Meeting minutes were approved along with the 2023 Financial Report.

WFBF and Affiliate Reports were next on the docket. The district Promotion and Education report was delivered by Brenda Dowiasch. The Buffalo County YFA report was handled Amy Ellis and the Buffalo County Promotion and Education report was presented by Emily Kaltenberg.

Kevin Whalen, District 4 Coordinator, spoke about how working together in a farm organization can lead to happy endings. Joe Bragger, WFBF District 4 Director, enlightened us on resolutions and personnel changes at WFBF.

The next major undertaking was the selection of delegates. Nominations were opened. A motion was made and seconded to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Pat Danzinger, Dustin Ellis and Jan Schaffner.

The motion carried. Emily Kaltenberg and Allison Bragger were nominated as alternates. The motion was made and seconded to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Emily Kaltenberg and Allison Bragger. The motion carried.

The election of Young Farmer and Agriculturists was next on the agenda. Nominations were opened. Collin Weltzien was nominated. The motion was made and seconded to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Collin Weltzien. The motion carried. Nominations were opened once more. Emily Kaltenberg was nominated. The motion was made and seconded to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Emily Kaltenberg. The motion carried.

The board of director positions were next to be filled. The nominations were opened. Bob Sendelbach, Mark Denk, Chris Ellis, Kyle Danzinger, Collin Weltzien and Dustin Ellis were nominated. The motion was made and seconded to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for all nominations. The motion carried.

The very important section of our meeting followed. Ten resolutions were presented of which two were brought from the floor. The motion was made and seconded to accept all twelve resolutions. The motion carried.

\$500 in door prizes were given out as well as T-shirts and two pairs of gloves from RMIC agent Steve Berger.



Laurie Peterson addresses the crowd on the District Rural Insurance performance.



Dan Merk, Rural Mutual Insurance Company CEO and Executive Vice-President, gave a presentation on the anatomy of a claim.



Emily Kaltenberg, County Promotion and Education chair gave an update on Promotion and Education Committee activities.

Leadership Institute Class 15 Wrap Up

Edward Rippley

Leadership Institute Participant and Buffalo County Farm Bureau President

The September class brought us together at the Farm Bureau office in Madison. Day one, we were able to listen to the Government Relations team of Jason Mugnaini, Tim Fiocchi, Tyler Wenzlaff and Erin Tomasik. 2023 Policy Development issues are Managed Forest Law, Property Tax and Use-Value Assessment Backgrounder, Solar Backgrounder and Interaction of Solar Development. If anyone has a resolution or an idea for a resolution, please contact a Farm Bureau representative and let them know what is on your mind. The county annual meeting is where we hash out the resolutions and vote on what to send on to the state annual meeting. The resolution committee meets two times. At the state annual meeting, the delegates vote on the resolutions during the Monday session. When some of the resolutions come up at Madison, Jason and Tim step into action and let our representatives know where Farm Bureau stands on the issue. On Day 2, we met at the Capitol and had a mock trial on some fake issues to show us what happens at the Capitol level with our representatives. The tour of the

Capitol was the highlight of the visit, which showed us the beauty of all the magnificent murals the building has. It was built in the early 1900s out of marble that was imported from afar. There is an outside viewing platform to see the spectacular views of the city.

In November the Institute Class 15 took a road trip to Lansing, Michigan to see the Michigan Farm Bureau headquarters. Michigan has a larger membership base with 65 counties, 200,000 associate members and 35,000 voting members. The services they have in their state include Farming Resources, which is a variety of programs aimed at making jobs easier and profitable, Ag Education, Young Farmers and Agriculturists and the Promotion and Education program. The Promotion and Education program also has a lab trailer to take to various schools around the state for kids to learn about agriculture.

Finally, we will have graduation at the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Annual Meeting at the Kalahari in December and in June we will be flying into Washington, D.C. to spend a week seeing the sights and visiting our representatives.

Buffalo County Land Judging

2023 LAND JUDGING CONTEST

The 2023 Land Judging Contest was held on Thursday, October 12th at Homestead Farms near Urne, WI in Buffalo County. This year's event was hosted by Buffalo County and staff from Dunn, Buffalo, Pepin, and Pierce County Land and Water Conservation, NRCS & FSA offices assisted with the contest.

Approximately 61 students representing 6 schools (Alma, Arcadia, Boyceville, Gilmanton, Hudson, and Menomonie) participated in the event. Students judged four pits for soil characteristics and made decisions as to best management for these sites.

First Place Team Menomonie		Team Score 1,191	
Top Scoring Individuals			
Brian Styer (311)	Hawkins Anderson (308)	Jackson Pfeilsticker (288)	Riley Wiersgalla (284)
Second Place Team Hudson		Team Score 1,005	
Top Scoring Individuals			
Ella Christenson (291)	Alxis D. (269)	Laurel Bostrom (226)	Ruby Ross (219)
Third Place Team Alma		Team Score 963	
Top Scoring Individuals			
Garrett Krause (265)	Anders Johnasen (251)	Alyssa Johnson (224)	Addison Johnson/Finley Noll (223)
Fourth Place Team Arcadia		Team Score 911	
Top Scoring Individuals			
Alec Grulkowski (257)	Skyler Case (235)	Caleb Pronschinske (210)	Landen Pehler (209)
Fifth Place Team Boyceville		Team Score 774	
Top Scoring Individuals			
Treylin Thorson (234)	M. Knopps (184)	Abigail Bauer (179)	Jasmine Morlock (177)
Sixth Place Team Gilmanton		Team Score 738	
Top Scoring Individuals			
Dillon Lessman (219)	Nathan Ashby (186)	Colton Fedie (167)	Alex Severson (166)

2023



First Annual Buffalo County Farm Bureau Golf Tournament

The First Annual Buffalo County Farm Bureau Golf Tournament was held July 20 at The Grove Golf Course in Cochrane. Emily Kaltenberg, Chair of the activity, was able to recruit sixteen teams and nine hole sponsors for the inaugural event along with her enthusiastic committee members.

The day was bright and sunny as Farm Bureau members participated in several contests throughout the day and enjoyed a meal. Each golfer received a door prize that was supplied by sponsors and was assembled by the committee. Attendance bags included balls and other golf paraphernalia. Neighboring businesses and Farm Bureaus brought out their best golfers with some first-time golfers in the crowd.

Contests ranged from Best Team Outfits to Closest-to-the-Tractor on the hole one drive. Best dressed went to the bib overall-clad Bragger-Ripley squad. Most dynamic went to the Pronschinske-Ellis gals. We are planning to have the second annual in August of 2024. A big thank you to all that participated as golfers or committee members!



The Bragger-Ripley Squad took first place in the best team outfits competition.

Eau Claire Culminates Activities with Annual Meeting

Eau Claire County Farm Bureau celebrated a very successful year with their annual meeting held Matt and Debbie Krenz's Farm on September 23. The Krenz's friendly dogs welcomed members to the shop for a fine meal and socializing.

The meeting started with the invocation. President Brenda Dowiasch followed with introductions of the guests.

The next portion of the meeting was a delicious meal of pulled pork arranged by the Food

Committee, chaired by Lisa Pettis.

Next on the agenda was the approval of the minutes of last year's meeting and the financials of this year's meeting. All items passed. Josh Carlson, RMIC agent, spoke on the size and service of Rural Insurance. Kevin Whalen, District 4 Coordinator, spoke on Eau Claire County's success in the past year. Joe Bragger led a get-to-know-each-member activity and spoke on positive changes in the Farm Bureau in the past year. Each member introduced themselves. Nominations were opened for state meeting delegates. Brenda Dowiasch and Matt Krenz were nominated. A motion by Lisa Pettis to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for those nominated was seconded by Steve Erdman. The motion carried.

Committee positions followed and nominations were opened. Lisa Pettis was nominated for Promotion and Education Chair. A motion to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Lisa Pettis was called. The motion carried. Young Farmer & Agriculturist Chair was the next office and nominations were opened. Heather Erdman was nominated. A motion to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Heather Erdman was

called. The motion carried.

The board of directors were the next positions to be filled and the nominations were opened. Aaron Wilhelm, Alvin Kohlhepp, Steve Erdman, Bret Kostka and Cullen Schwelwitz were nominated. A motion by Steve Strey to close nominations and cast a

unanimous ballot was seconded by Steve Erdman. The motion carried. Resolutions were the next item of business. 12 resolutions were presented,

two were amended and two were brought from the floor. A motion by Mark Karow to approve all the proposed resolutions was seconded by Steve Erdman. The motion carried. Resolutions will be printed if adopted at the state annual meeting.

Door prizes were handed out to conclude meeting. Door prizes included new T-shirts, and beautiful table center pieces. A big Thank You! to Matt and Debbie Krenz for hosting!

Captions:

1. Our furry hosts were at the sign to welcome Farm Bureau members.
2. The shop filled rapidly with Farm Bureau members.
3. Josh Carlson addressed the meeting on behalf of the Rural Mutual Insurance Company.
4. Brenda Dowiasch served as our MC and Chair for the Annual Meeting.
5. Joe Bragger, District 4 Director, updated the crowd on the happenings with the State board.

Eau Claire Farm Bureau Hosts Barn Dance

Grapevine right... Grapevine left. Heel...toe... Words that were heard throughout Castle Rock Barn during the Barn Dance sponsored by Eau Claire County Farm Bureau. Nothing like a good old-fashioned neighborhood get-together complete with food, hayrides and some dancing fun. A big thanks to the activity chairs, DJ, the Kostkas and all the members who took time to come out for some old-fashioned fun.



Peter Mueller served as DJ for the evening.



The hayride was a big hit to start the festivities for the evening.



The dance's theme was "Barn in the USA."



Line dancing was done by some enthusiastic members.



The Chairs of the event were Heidi Strey and Heather Erdman.



Social warm-up was enjoyed by all.

Jackson County Holds Annual Meeting on September 10

The 2023 edition of the Jackson County Farm Bureau annual meeting was held on September 10 at the "Party Barn" which is located on Steve and Pat Kling's Farm near Taylor. Joe Bragger led the group in a prayer before the meal. The meal was excellent pulled pork with potluck sides along with some delicious desserts.

After the call to order, President Nathan Kling introduced the WFBF Chief Administrative Officer, Bradley Uken, who gave the Jackson County members a brief background and some formative ideas about the future of our organization. He topped it off with a question-and-answer session that allowed members to participate.

Following Bradley's presentation, Savannah Brown gave an update for the District Young Farmer and Agriculturists activities. She started out with the American Farm Bureau Federation meeting in Puerto Rico and gave us a verbal trip through all the activities the YFA group offers.

Kevin Whalen, District 4 Coordinator, presented on the "why" of Farm Bureau membership. He related his personal story of why banding together to help each other is always in style for farmers. Joe Bragger, District 4 Director, spelled out the goals of the board and offered a glimpse into big things on the horizon.

Savannah Brown started the next section of the annual meeting with a new activity which is recognizing youth members with \$50 grants for participation at the Jackson County Fair. Ten members received checks of \$50 for use for their projects.

The business session was next on the agenda. The 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes were moved by Leonard Olson with a second by Steve Kling. The 2023 Financial Report included a motion by Taylor Koss which was second by Savannah Brown to approve. Both motions were approved unanimously.

The election summary is as follows:



•Promotion and Education Chair: Nominations were opened. Taylor Koss was nominated. Motion by Steve Kling, second by Leonard Olson to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Taylor Koss. Motion carried.

•Young Farmer & Agriculturist Chair: Nominations were opened. Savannah Brown was nominated. Motion by Taylor Koss, second by Steve Kling to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Savannah Brown Motion carried.

•Board of Directors: Nominations were opened. Leonard Olson and Steve Kling were nominated. Motion by Savannah Brown, second by Leonard Olson to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for those nominated. Motion carried.

•State Annual Meeting Delegates: Nominations were

opened. Ryan Sawyer, Bill Freese and Taylor Koss were nominated. Motion by Nate Kling, second by Savannah Brown to close nominations. Motion carried. Nate Kling, Taylor Koss, Ryan Sawyer and Brian Freese will serve as delegates, Steve

Kling and Dave Olson will serve as the alternates. 12 resolutions were presented; one was removed from those presented and no resolutions were brought from the floor. A motion was made by Bill

Freese and seconded by Leonard Olson to approve the proposed resolutions. The motion carried. A big "Thank You!" goes out to the Kling's for hosting the event.

Captions:

1. Bradley Uken presenting on his background and the future of WFBF.

2. Savannah Brown giving verbal tour of YFA activities.

3.-7. Fair participants receiving project grants

William McNulty Family Selected as Jackson County's Outstanding Farm Family

The William McNulty Family of Black River Falls has been selected as Jackson County's Outstanding Farm Family by the combined sponsors of Jackson County Fair, Black River Falls FFA Alumni and Jackson County Farm Bureau. Receiving the award at the fair were Bill and Sam McNulty who represented the entire family.

The McNulty family was recognized at the Annual Outstanding Farm Family Dinner, which was held Wednesday, August 2 at the Jackson County Fair. MC and Committee Chair, Leonard Olson, recognized the achievements of the McNulty Family Farm, LLC in raising dairy heifers, beef cattle, steers and non-GMO layers along with their other contributions to the community. The McNulty home farm consists of organic hay, corn and soybeans and has been certified organic since 2000. The family milked cows on three farms for a while in the early 2020s. They originally shipped milk to Organic Valley and then switched to Westby Creamery until 2022. The dairy cows were sold in the spring of 2022. Since 1983, McNulty Farms has also been custom planting, harvesting and trucking grain for area farmers.

Billy started farming right out of high school. Billy and Sara have three children Mandy, Dana and Jesse. All have been active in farming. Billy and Sara also have six grandchildren. Sam and Kathy work the layer barn along with cropping. Sam has three children who are Ryan, Jared and Danielle. They currently assist on the farm.

The recognition dinner was a well-attended event at the fair with many participants enjoying the good meal before the evening's tractor pull. This year was a bumper crop for nominees with many deserving families. The sponsors will hold onto the nominations to be used in future years. The FFA Alumni, Jackson County Farm Bureau and Jackson County Fair would like to thank everyone who made the event possible.



Leonard Olson, MC and Committee Chair, reading off the list of accomplishments of the William McNulty Family.



A large crowd assembled for a good meal and to give recognition to the Outstanding Farm Family.



(L to R) Sam McNulty, Billy McNulty, and Leonard Olson during the award presentation.

Jackson County Farm Bureau Helps Sponsor "Stay Sweet and Safe!"

Jackson County Farm Bureau helped sponsor the highly successful Melrose-Mindoro FFA "Stay Sweet and Safe" community service program. The FFA, under the direction of Advisor Steve Boe, delivered 86 care packages to farmers in the Melrose-Mindoro School District. Over 20 Melrose-Mindoro FFA Chapter members delivered appreciation gifts (a box of Kwik Trip glazers, milk and orange juice as well as a farmer first aid kit put together by Mel-Min FFA members) to farmers throughout the area. The students, all of who generously gave up the day off of school, drove to farms and businesses on October 27 to make the deliveries. Participating farmers were given a postcard to notify each of the drop-off times.

The FFA members were proud to offer a very small token of appreciation to the men and women in our community who make farming their life's purpose. Members enjoyed catching up with local farmers and presenting the items along with messages of good cheer. Community members who were unavailable had their

care kits dropped off, so they were still able to receive them. The members found and enjoyed their "Stay Sweet and Safe kit" when they completed their work.

FFA is an incredibly diverse organization where any student - no matter of their background, their interests and passions or their future career plans can find a place for them within FFA to strengthen their personal leadership goals and gain real-life career experiences. That said, the bedrock of our foundation is farming and the farmers who work to provide the food, fuel and fiber that we all use and consume every day. This activity brought the FFA and community supporters together to keep the bonds of agriculture strong!

Jackson County Farm Bureau provided financial support and Kwik Trip sponsored financial and product support. Steve Boe, the Melrose-Mindoro FFA Advisor, is a board of director for the Jackson County Farm Bureau.



Over 20 of the Melrose Mindoro FFA members delivered for "Stay Sweet and Safe."



Delivering to homes in the Melrose-Mindoro School District.



Catching farmers at work and delivering to farms.



The kit included sweets to eat and an assembled first aid packet.

Monroe County

wfbf.com/about/counties/monroe
MonroeCountyFarmBureau

Coloring Contest

Open to children of Farm Bureau families in Monroe County.

Mail entries by Monday, January 15, 2024,

to:

Peggy Wright

605 W. Wisconsin Street

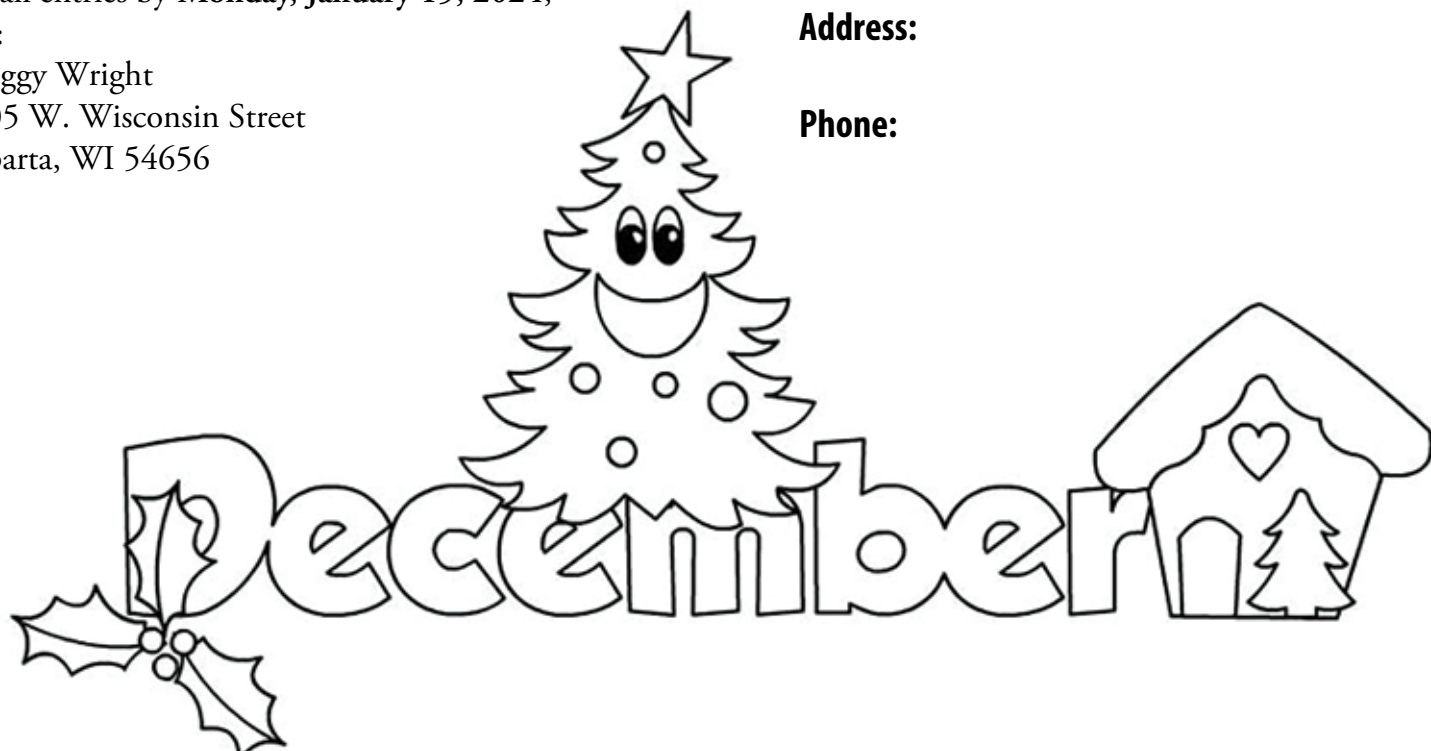
Sparta, WI 54656

Name:

Age:

Address:

Phone:



Monroe County Farm Bureau Initiates New Program at Annual Meeting

A very dedicated crowd met on August 20 in Cashton Park to celebrate the activities of the Monroe County Farm Bureau. A fine meal was presented by the Food Committee, headed by Derek Trescher. After the introductions, the reports were made by guests of the Farm Bureau.

Rural Mutual Insurance Agent, Bradley Leis, provided an update. He reported on an improving sales environment along with the new agents that are working like rock stars to improve Rural Insurance's position in the area.

Kevin Whalen, District 4 Coordinator, presented the importance of belonging to an organization to accomplish all that is needed in agriculture.

District 4 Director Joe Bragger regaled the crowd with stories of the impact that Monroe County has had on the state and federal level with its actions and resolutions.

The minutes of 2022 Annual Meeting were approved along with the financials of 2023. Ballots were cast for the election of delegates to the state meeting. Those nominated as delegates were Al Ferries, Derek Trescher, James Herricks and J. Wells with Dawn Powell and Kori Blank as alternates. Directors were to be selected next. The motion was made and seconded to



open nominations. Those nominated were Karen Leis, Al Ferries and Dawn Powell. A motion by Derek Trescher was seconded by Al Ferries to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for all those nominated. The motion carried. The next position to be elected was the Young Farmer and Agriculturists Chair. Emily Powell was nominated. A motion by J. Wells was seconded by

Karen Leis to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Emily Powell. The motion carried. The next position to be elected was the Promotion and Education Chair. Kori Blank was nominated for Chairman. A motion by J. Wells was seconded by Karen Leis to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Kori Blank. The motion carried.

The final action of the evening was to approve the resolutions to be sent to the state annual meeting. Ten resolutions were presented. A motion made by Jim Herricks was seconded by Scott Schmitz to approve all resolutions presented. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned, and all members enjoyed some casual conversation.

Captions:

1. Bradley Leis presents encouraging news from RMIC at the Annual Meeting
2. Wells presents a \$50 grant to a deserving exhibitor at the Monroe County Annual Meeting.

Monroe County Farm Bureau Starts Animal Grant Program

The Monroe County Farm Bureau launched its First Annual Fair Animal Grant Program. The program started with entry due July 1 with exhibitors needing to fill out an application with all basic information along with the questions of how their project relates to agriculture and how they would spend the \$50 grant.

Applicants needed to have their parents as a Monroe County Farm Bureau member and each selected applicant needed to present at the Monroe County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. The entries were reviewed by a committee of Farm Bureau members and selections of winners were made. 11 exhibitors were selected. They included: Kyle Mann, Isaac Wells, Nathan Wells, Audrey Wells, Brady Wells, Cole Wells, Devin Herricks, Josie Bailey, Tegan Bailey, Blair Bailey and Carley Bailey. Winners presented at the annual meeting with their checks mailed out shortly afterward. A big thanks goes to members who worked on the committee and to Jack Herricks who initiated the idea.

Monroe County Farm Bureau Scholarship

To be eligible you must meet the following qualifications:

- 1) Must be a family member of the Monroe County Farm Bureau Federation.
- 2) Must be going to school in Agriculture, it may be either to Farm and Industry Short Course, a technical school, or university.
- 3) Must have the application in by March 15th, 2024.
- 4) Must be a graduating high school senior.

There will be two \$250 scholarships presented and they will be awarded to the winners upon proof of first semester attendance.

For more information and to get an application, you may contact Peggy at 608-269-3173 or 608-372-9272.



Trempealeau County

Wisconsin FFA State Soil and Land Evaluation Contest

Nearly 200 students from 27 Wisconsin high schools competed in the Wisconsin FFA State Soil and Land Evaluation Competition on Tuesday, October 10 at Blackhawk Technical College's Monroe Campus in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Land judging contests promote the importance of soil health and education, partnerships and teamwork. It is important for NRCS to stay involved with competitions like this because of the benefit the students get from it. It takes a lot of different hands to put together a competition. NRCS can help facilitate these competitions by having our soil scientists do the official scoring as well as helping with any questions before and after the competition.

Many soil conservationists participated in land judging contests as students, which helped them determine what they were looking for in a career. Individuals working as NRCS employees find helping with these contests and seeing the high school students



The first-place team consisted of Ella Salas, Mirielle Smith, Caleb Heiser and Molly Olson. Molly was the overall first-place individual for the contest.

learn to be a favorite part of the job.

Land judging serves as a tool to teach participants about soil science, health and management. The competition is designed to guide participants toward the understanding and importance of basic soil properties as they affect the use and management of soils, as well as best practices to preserve and manage natural resources, including soil and water.

Four soil pits providing a diversity of landscapes and soil were dug on a farm site near Black Hawk College. Each of the sites were evaluated for position in landscape, slope, texture, structure and necessary conservation practices. Team scores were as follows:

Teams were ranked in two divisions – junior and senior. Junior team winners were from Fennimore, with Cassville and Potosi coming in second and third. In the senior division, the top three teams were Monticello in first, Potosi in second, and River Ridge in third.

Soil Health Field Day

The Buffalo/Trempealeau County Farmer Network held their Soil Health Field Day on July 27 starting with a morning session bright and early at 9:00 a.m. Anna Teeter, Conservation Agronomist with Cargill's Regenerative Agriculture Department, welcomed a robust crowd to Karl Geske's farm for the field day. Anna followed up her welcome with her presentation on carbon markets and what they could mean to soil enthusiasts.

The next stage of the material was the morning workshop sessions. The initial session was the "Rainfall Simulator" demonstration that emphasizes the need to keep plants in soils that are exposed to rain to increase filtration, protect aggregation and keep retention of topsoil. The simulator puts exposed soils side by side with different levels of cover crops and tillage. The demo gave a visual example of maintaining water in soil and how beneficial cover crops are to soil and water quality.

The group divided into thirds for additional workshops on drone use and operation, interseeding of corn and soil health testing through evaluation of an infield soil pit. Each of the workshops lasted about a half-hour with question-and-answer sessions following each.

Karl Geske, President of the Buffalo-Trempealeau Farmer Network, explained the group's function, funding and history. After his presentation, the group of attendees were treated to a complimentary lunch courtesy of the field day sponsors.

The afternoon activities included a panel discussion by active farmers and specialists on incorporating practices of cover crops and other soil health developing practices. Anna Teeter, Karl Geske, Ken Congdon and Brian Maliszewski contributed insight that gave the audience a good summary of the important things to do while working in fields. A big thank you goes to all presenters and participants that made the Buffalo/Trempealeau County Farmer Network field day successful.

Captions:

1. Karl Geske, host and President of Buffalo-Trempealeau Farmer Network.
2. Kristin Foehringer demonstrating a soil health pit.
3. Panel of farmer experts (from L to R) Karl Geske, Ken Congdon, Anna Teeter and Brian Maliszewski.
4. Heavy duty drone and Jay Sorg, drone specialist.
5. Karl Geske presenting on interseeding in corn.



Trempealeau County Farm Bureau Holds Annual Meeting

Many members and guests attended the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau meeting on Tuesday, August 15. The meeting was held in Blair at the Schroeder Shelter in Memorial Park. Many Guests were present including Randy Palmer, our new Rural Insurance District manager for Trempealeau County; Robert Leege, Executive Director of Member Relations for Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation; Wendy Volkert, Senior Director of Member Relations; Joe Bragger, District 4 Director; and Kevin Whalen, District 4 Coordinator.

The business meeting opened with attention to housekeeping details. A motion by Shane Goplin was seconded by Jescey Thompson to approve the 2022 Annual Meeting minutes. The motion carried. A motion by Shane Goplin was seconded by Kendra Goplin to approve the financial report. The motion carried. A motion to ratify the dues increase that was passed by the board of directors in June was moved by Kendra Goplin and seconded by Dave Anderson. The ratification passed.

Our main speaker was Wendy Volkert, Senior Direct of Member Relations for WFBF. She highlighted the leadership development program at Farm Bureau and brought past graduates of the Leadership Institute to the microphone to speak about their experience. Shane Goplin and Brenda Dowiasch gave input on their own experiences.

Randy Palmer was next on the agenda and Randy spoke on behalf of Rural Mutual Insurance Company. He explained the strength of RMIC and the quality rating for corporate evaluation.

Robert Leege spoke on membership trends for local Farm Bureau county organizations. He presented the data for the last ten years and provided key points to maintaining membership. Kevin Whalen presented on self-evaluation and how it relates to what Farm Bureau is doing with its grassroots meetings. Joe Bragger gave an update on the status of activities in District 4.

The grant part of our meeting was next up. Two grants were presented to youth with projects for the Trempealeau County Fair. Promotion and Education Representative Jescey Thompson spoke on his presentations in GET, Osseo, and other districts as well as his selection as State FFA Officer. Young Farmer and Agriculturists Chair Katie Engevoled spoke on upcoming activities including the golf outing and Barn Dance.

In the very important part of the meeting that selects leadership for our group, we started by electing our state delegates for December's Annual Meeting. A motion by Kyle Nilsestuen was seconded by Jescey Thompson to open nominations for

WFBF Annual Meeting Delegates. The motion carried. Those nominated were Derek Husmoen, Kyle Nilsestuen, Jeremiah Walek and Shane Goplin with Brian Maliszewski as an alternate. In Director selection, a motion by Shane Goplin to open director nomination was called. A motion made by Kyle Nilsestuen to suspend the rule on term limits was also called. The motion passed unanimously. Derek Husmoen, Kyle Nilsestuen and Jeremiah Walek were nominated. A motion by Katie Engevoled was seconded by Kendra Goplin to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for those nominated. Joe

presented and reviewed the proposed resolutions from the district policy development meeting. A motion by Shane Goplin was seconded by Kendra Goplin to approve all 12 proposed. The motion carried. A motion by Katie Engevoled was seconded by Dave Anderson to adjourn at 8:08pm. The motion carried.



Captions:

1. Bob Leege presents on membership.
2. The animal grants were the highlight of Trempealeau County's Annual Meeting.
3. Wendy Volkert was our guest speaker on WFBF leadership programs.
4. Many young exhibitors get their first public speaking experience at the Trempealeau County Annual Meeting.

American Degree Recipients

Congratulations to the following American FFA degree Recipients from Farm Bureau District 4

Avery W. Bailey, Holmen FFA
Emmalyn Brandvig, Tomah FFA
Michael Paul Byrne, Neillsville FFA

Samuel Linzmeier, Tomah FFA
Axel Andrew Noll, Alma FFA
Skylar Pierce, Tomah FFA
Ana E. Roehling, Wonewoc-Center FFA
Hannah Walters, Tomah FFA



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Trempealeau County

“

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Joshua

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