



# Grassroots

District 2 News

## District Director Report



**Arch Morton Jr.**  
WFBF District 2 Director

Hello again fellow District 2 Farm Bureau members!

As I write this report, on October 18, it's amazing to see most of the soybeans and corn in my area, and around the six counties in District 2, have already been harvested. We've had especially hot and dry weather throughout September and most of

October. I hope that your fall harvest season went well, too!

This is a very important time for Wisconsin Farm Bureau. Our Wisconsin Farm Bureau Annual Meeting will be held at the Kalahari in Wisconsin Dells, along with the YFA Conference from December 6-9. I hope many of you are planning to attend. The most important event of the Annual Meeting is the resolution session held on Monday, December 9. That's when the delegates from around the state, representing each county Farm Bureau, will vote on our policies. These policies give our government relations team direction when they lobby on agricultural issues at the state capital.

These policies originate at the county farm bureau level and were approved

at the county Farm Bureau annual meetings. This is a major reason why we are a grassroots organization.

There are also many other events at the WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference. These include dinners, award presentations, YFA contests, workshops, district caucuses and much more. It's a great opportunity to network and have fun with people who have many things in common and believe in the future of Wisconsin agriculture. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

It was my pleasure to participate in all six county annual meetings in our district back in August and September. They were all very interesting and well planned, with great food and conversation, as well as the important business that was conducted. Congratulations to Kat Peper (Sauk) and Eric Wuthrich (Green) for being elected as new county presidents! They are both recent graduates of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Leadership Institute.

Speaking of the Leadership Institute, we have three more members from District 2 who have been selected to participate in the next class, starting in January 2025. They are Allison Gorr (Green), Austin Sandmire (Sauk) and Jeremy Skemp (Dane). The Institute means very much to me, being a graduate of Class 3 in December 2009. Congratulations to all three of you!

I hope to see many of you soon. Stay safe and warm!

## Leadership Institute Capstone to Washington, D.C.

Stephanie Hoff, Dane County Participant

My Leadership Institute capstone trip to Washington D.C. was nothing short of memorable, impactful and inspiring.

The Institute is a year-long program that develops the next generation of Farm Bureau leaders. After a rigorous year of learning from experts, improving our communication and speaking skills as well as developing friendships, the class culminates the experience with a trip to Washington, D.C. Over the last week of June in our nation's capital, my Institute class put what we learned to practice. It was also a treat to bond with WFBF Board members and staff.

The professional highlights of the capstone trip were meeting with the American Farm Bureau Federation, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the French Embassy. From these visits, it was valuable for me to get better acquainted with Federal Milk Marketing Orders, the status of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in dairy cattle and understand the pressure that farmers in the European Union are under to adhere to environmental regulations.

My Institute class also met with Wisconsin's congressional delegation and their staff. As a team, we advocated for Farm Bureau policies that the

organization would like to see passed as either standalone legislation or within the Farm Bill.

We didn't stay in business professional dress for the whole week – my class did get time to see the sights of the city. I enjoyed sampling copious amounts of crabcakes, exploring the Library of Congress and visiting George Washington's Mount Vernon. The cherry on top of it all was the night tour of both the Capitol and the national monuments.

The Leadership Institute is one example of how Wisconsin Farm Bureau stays true to its grassroots values by investing time and resources into its membership. This experience has equipped me with a new set of tools – skills and strengths to better

serve my family, workplace and community. I highly encourage Farm Bureau members who are looking to take the next step in their involvement or their career to consider applying.



**District 2 participants on the Leadership Institute capstone trip to Washington, D.C. include Stephanie Hoff, Eric Wuthrich, Dave Mickelson, Arch Morton, Jr., Kat Peper and Brooke Truitem.**

# District 2 News

## A Year in Review: Young Farmer and Agriculturist



### Brady and Kat Peper

WFBF YFA Committee District 2 Representatives

As we wrap up our third and final year on the YFA Committee, it's incredible to reflect on how quickly time has flown. Serving in this role has been an absolute pleasure, and we've thoroughly enjoyed working with all the county YFA chairs

to support and grow our YFA program. Although our time is coming to an end, we are confident that we're leaving the position in capable hands and are proud to announce that Kadi and Eric Senkowski of Dane County have been appointed to the position. They are active members of Farm Bureau and are no strangers to YFA. We are excited for them to take over as the District 2 YFA Representatives this December after the WFBF YFA Conference.

This year has been particularly special for us as Kat served as the YFA Committee Chair and sat on the state Board of Directors. We've had the privilege of participating in numerous events, including the American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Convention, the Young Farmers & Ranchers Conference and a trip to Washington, D.C. One of the highlights of our year was organizing a district hockey outing with the Madison Capitols, which was a huge success!

As we look ahead, we're gearing up for the YFA Conference and WFBF Annual Meeting in December. We have an excellent lineup of speakers, workshops and entertainment planned. This year's theme, "Building New Frontiers," promises to be engaging, so don't forget to bring your best western outfit for Friday night!

District 2 will be well represented in the YFA contests again this year:



- YFA Discussion Meet: Brooke Trustem (Rock), Stephanie Hoff (Dane), and Scott Timm (Green)

- Farming for the Future Finalists: Jacob and Eliza Bobolz (Rock)

- Outstanding Agriculture Professional Award Finalists: Brooke Trustem (Rock) and Kat Peper (Sauk)

District 2 also has finalists in the 35 Under 35 program. Categories include sustainable storytelling, sustainable environment, sustainable future, sustainable self and sustainable service. The finalists from District 2 are:

- Sustainable Future: Sydney Flick (Columbia), Karoline Homan (Dodge)

- Sustainable Self: Tess Zettle (Green)

- Sustainable Service: Amy Austin (Green), Allison Gorr (Green), Lily Schuster (Dodge), Eric

Wuthrich (Green), Beth Yanke (Sauk)

As our term ends, we would like to thank District 2 for supporting us and providing us with the opportunity to serve on the WFBF YFA Committee. It has been an amazing experience that we are truly thankful for. We are looking forward to seeing you all at many Farm Bureau events in the future!

**1. Discussion meet participants discuss the topic, "Young farmers and ranchers are finding they need to diversify their farm portfolio. What are some ways that young farmers and ranchers can utilize diversification to explore new revenue sources? How can Farm Bureau support YF&R members as they strengthen their farm and ranch businesses?"**

**2. District 2 YFA Discussion Meet participants include Brooke Trustem (Rock), Scott Timm (Green) and Stephanie Hoff (Dane).**

## District 2 Golf Outing Fundraiser

Sam Skemp, chair

Before I get into the details of our District 2 fundraiser, I would like to remind everyone how the funds are used. The funds raised are used for college student scholarships, Agriculture in the Classroom, Young Farmer and Agriculturist program, materials for our farm safety demonstrations, agriculture promotion and education, legislative and local affairs committee activities and more.

I am pleased to report that our District 2 Golf Outing, which was held at the Oaks Golf Course, was a huge success. The event took place on August 13, the weather was great and a fun time was had by all. There were hole events, a 50/50 raffle, silent auction prizes, a ball toss and a putting contest. There was a box lunch served during the golf event followed by snacks and hors d'oeuvres. After the round of golf, we announced all the prize winners while everyone had the opportunity to visit with each other. We raised over \$9,000 after expenses at this event. The proceeds were divided between the District 2 counties based on the number of people they had golfing and auction prizes donated. We received many positive comments on this event. I would like to thank everyone who participated in the golf outing by either golfing or donating prizes, sponsoring a hole or contributing toward the lunch.

We feel our District 2 golf fundraiser was very successful, and we are looking forward to holding another one next year. There will be more information on next year's District 2 Golf Outing coming up in future newsletters. Again, I would like to thank everyone who participated in our fundraising event. Whether it was helping with the event, contributing prizes for the raffles and silent auctions or being a hole or lunch sponsor, we couldn't have accomplished everything without your support.



Seventy-six golfers supported the District 2 Golf Outing Fundraiser at the Oaks Golf Course in Cottage Grove.



This year's winning team was Randy Adler, Dan McGowan, Pat McGowan and Bruce Neinow.



The ball toss is always a fun way to kick off the golf outing.

# District 2 News

## Farmers and Agriculturists Unlimited Discussion Meet



1. Discussion meet participants discussed the topic, "How can the Farm Bureau ensure that members transitioning out of the Young Farmer and Agriculturist program remain active and engaged in the organization?"
2. Kristi Fiedler (Dodge) won the discussion meet. Committee chairperson Dustin Williams presented her with the traveling trophy. Kristi will represent District 2 at the WFBF Annual Meeting in the Farmers and Agriculturist Unlimited Discussion Meet in December.

## Dane County

[wfbf.com/about/counties/dane](http://wfbf.com/about/counties/dane)  
DaneCountyFarmBureau

## Annual Meeting Highlights

Scott Eastwood, co-chair

The Dane County Farm Bureau held its annual meeting on September 12 at Rex's Innkeeper in Waunakee. The meeting was extremely well attended this year with 79 total people in attendance, of which 42 were voting members. Stephanie Hoff from the Midwest Farm Report once again did an excellent job serving as our evening's emcee.

After a wonderful meal, attendees had the opportunity to hear two of the essay contest winners read their winning entries. Additionally, the five scholarship winners were acknowledged. Kirby Wagner, Associate Manager of Government Relations for GROWMARK and the FS System served as the keynote speaker, providing great information about the upcoming elections.

Two board members have decided not to run for reelection. We'd like to thank Pat Canales and Scott Eastwood for their efforts. In their place, two new board members were elected – welcome Grace Howe and Josh Miller to our board! We also welcomed Carson Patzner as the new Young Farmer and Agriculturist chair. Ten delegates were elected to represent Dane County at the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Annual Meeting held in Wisconsin Dells on December 6-9. Finally, the members in attendance voted on a policy that relates to land purchased for public benefit.

The annual meeting is a wonderful (and free) benefit of membership for the Dane County Farm Bureau.



Sam Skemp presents policy resolutions at this year's Dane County Farm Bureau annual meeting held at Rex's Innkeeper in Waunakee.

Kirby Wagner, Associate Manager of Government Relations for GROWMARK and the FS System, served as the keynote speaker providing great information about the upcoming elections.



## Policy Development Meeting Generates Resolutions

Sam Skemp, chair

Each year Dane County Farm Bureau members develop, discuss and vote on resolutions addressing local, state and national issues facing agriculture. State and national resolutions are discussed and voted on by delegates at the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation and American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meetings, respectively.

With more than 51,000 members representing all aspects of agriculture, WFBF is a respected voice for agriculture with legislators, the Governor, state agencies, the media and other ag organizations.

This year we held our Policy Development meeting on July 10 at the Oaks

Golf Course in Cottage Grove. We had several committee members there and reviewed current policies along with discussing current issues. Proposed policies were brought to the Dane County Farm Bureau Board and approved. There was also discussion about other issues that agriculture is facing. They were then presented at our county annual meeting where Dane County Farm Bureau members approved the policies. Now they will go to the WFBF Policy Development Committee to be reviewed and if approved they will be voted on at the WFBF Annual Meeting in December.

With Farm Bureau being a grassroots organization and policies starting at the county level, your involvement is very important. I would like to thank all the committee members for their participation.

## Welcome New Board of Directors: Howe, Miller and Patzner

**Grace Howe**, a rural northeast Iowa native, grew up heavily involved in the dairy industry where she quickly found her passion for the agriculture industry. This passion led her to Iowa State University where she graduated in December 2022 with degrees in agricultural and rural policy studies as well as journalism and mass communications. Following graduation, she relocated to the Madison area to join the Wisconsin Agri-Business Association where she currently serves as the Director of Policy and Communications. As a young agricultural enthusiast, Grace is dedicated to advocating for the industry and rural America through public policy and education.

**Josh Miller** owns and operates several businesses in the agricultural sector. His family has a long history in agriculture. Currently, he row crop farms with his son, Garrett. Along with the row crop farming, Josh has a land improvement division as well as a commodity brokerage service. He strongly believes in advocating for agriculture. Josh says, "As our society grows more in the urban areas, I believe we have lost focus on one of the most valuable industries in America. That needs to change, which is why I believe I will be an asset to the Dane County Farm Bureau Board."

**Carson Patzner** is the YFA chair for Dane County Farm Bureau. He row crop farms corn and soybeans in Dane County. Carson is an avid outdoorsman and enjoys skiing, golfing and playing beer league softball. When he's not enjoying the outdoors, he continues his work on winning 'Uncle of the Year' from his newborn niece, Caroline.



Grace Howe



Josh Miller



Carson Patzner

## Agriculture in the Classroom

Darlene Arneson, co-chair

### Dane County AITC Food for America Grants for Dane County FFA Chapters 2024-2025

Dane County Agriculture in the Classroom would like to support our county FFA Chapters as they visit classrooms and conduct activities during the 2024-2025 school year. Grant amount: One \$300 grant per chapter during the 2024-2025 school year. Eligible school districts/FFA Chapters include Belleville, Cambridge, DeForest, Edgerton, Marshall, Mt. Horeb, Oregon, Stoughton, Sun Prairie East, Sun Prairie West, Verona and Waunakee. FFA Chapters can submit a request for the funds anytime during the school year. The project summary, number of contacts made and outcomes must be included for payment. Payment may be made before or after the project is completed. A follow-up report must be submitted within 30 days of the activity. Projects must be completed between September 1, 2024 – June 1, 2025. Send completed application to Darlene Arneson, Dane County FB AITC, 2056 Skaalen Road, Stoughton, WI 53589. If questions, email arnesonfamily5@gmail.com or call 608.873.7209

### Dane County AITC Fourth-Fifth Grade Essay Contest

2025 Essay Topic - "A Wisconsin Tree and Me: How Wisconsin trees grow fruit & fiber"

The Wisconsin Agriculture in the Classroom essay contest is an annual program that challenges fourth and fifth grade students to research and write an informative essay. The essay contest gleans the annual theme from the 2024 American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture Book of the Year, My Grandpa, "My Tree and Me" by Roxanne Troup. Wisconsin Agriculture is Tree-mendous! Wisconsin is a top producer of food, fiber and fuel that are grown, raised and produced from trees. Fruits, paper, maple syrup, Christmas Trees, nuts, timber, landscaping use, nuts, timber and more are all grown and produced from Wisconsin trees. The over 130 varieties of coniferous and deciduous trees have shaped Wisconsin's history, communities and economy varieties of trees grown for agricultural uses.

### Dane County Prizes and Incentives

Dane County AITC will award both a fourth and fifth grade winner. For each grade level: 1st place- \$100, 2nd place- \$50 and 3rd place- \$25. The 1st place winners will receive the \$100 cash prize along with a classroom presentation. The two 1st place students, their parents and teacher will be invited to the Dane County Annual Meeting on September 11, 2025. Teacher incentive: If your classroom has at least ten entries, the teacher will receive a \$100 gift certificate to the National Agriculture in the Classrooms online store!



The first-place essay contest winner for fifth grade read her essay at the Dane County Annual Meeting. Fifth grade essay contest - Gretchen Kestler (teacher), Eila Murphy (winner) and Kathleen Murphy (mom) of the Waunakee Intermediate School in Waunakee



The first-place essay contest winner for fourth grade read her essay at the Dane County Annual Meeting. Fourth grade essay contest - Anna Slowiak (teacher), Irelynn Sannes (winner), and parents Katie and Scott Sannes of Kegonsa Elementary School in Stoughton.

## Congratulations Scholarship Recipients

### Anna Putney

My name is Anna Putney and I am from Verona. I am entering my fourth and final year as a nursing student at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. I am currently working at the Madison VA Hospital serving veterans in a nursing internship role. My grandfather, Julian Rhiner, was a farmer his whole life as well as a veteran, and I take pride in caring for others like him.

### Cassie Radl

Cassie Radl is from Roxbury and is a senior at Edgewood College. She is majoring in Biology and Environmental Science and minoring in Spanish and Nutrition. She is actively involved on campus in various organizations such as the outdoor club and campus ministry. After graduation, Cassie will either continue her education pursuing a masters in either botany or horticulture or she will enter the workforce pursuing her passion in the field of plant science. From growing up in an agricultural family, working for a horticultural research lab, to now working on a farm, Cassie hopes to continue to make a positive impact in agriculture.

### Mathew Karls

Hello! My name is Mathew Karls. I am a mechanical engineering undergraduate student currently studying at Milwaukee School of Engineering. I just recently returned from my junior year study abroad in

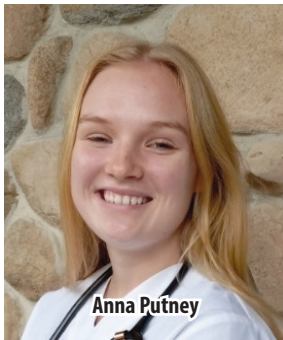
Lübeck, Germany! I had a wonderful time learning about other cultures and traveling around Europe, as well as picking up German as a third language! Now that I have returned, my current goal is to graduate with a double bachelor's degree from both MSOE and Lübeck University of Applied Sciences. After my graduation, I want to pursue engineering and create innovations that can impact a variety of applications. By doing so, I hope to inspire other people to pursue engineering and improve lives.

### Sam Mell

Sam Mell is the son of Steven Mell and Kathryn Nelson. He grew up on his family's 200-cow Registered Holstein Dairy farm. Sam recently graduated from DeForest Area High School where he was very involved in his FFA program. In the fall, Sam will be attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison and majoring in agronomy.

### Sydni Mell

Sydni Mell is the daughter of Steven Mell and Kathryn Nelson. She grew up on her family's 200-cow Registered Holstein Dairy farm. Sydni is a senior at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where she is majoring in dairy science. She is involved in the Association of Women in Agriculture, Badger Dairy Club and UW-Madison's Collegiate Farm Bureau. She plans to have a career in the dairy industry.



Anna Putney



Cassie Radl



Mathew Karls



Sam Mell



Sydni Mell

## Summer Ag Promotions Fun

Lindsey Tjugum and Sarah Shimshak, co-chairs

The Promotion and Education Committee was busy again this summer meeting consumers at several events.

New this year, we partnered with Madtown BMX, a bike track in DeForest. We sponsored trophies for the Madtown Dairy Mayhem, a new race series that took place during June Dairy Month. During the finals, we had goodie bags with dairy activity books and facts for the kids in attendance.

We also celebrated National Dairy Month by attending the Dane County Breakfast on the Farm at Blue Star Dairy in DeForest where we interacted with visitors by testing their agriculture trivia with the "dairy dice".

In July, we attended the Dane County Fair, where we sponsored the Learning Lanes and exhibitor educational grants. We awarded a group of 4-Hers from the Waunakee Whirlwinds money to create an educational display for their poultry exhibit. We also hosted a scavenger hunt with questions from this display and others, with a sweet reward of a cream puff or cheese curds, graciously sponsored by the Stoughton FFA Alumni stand.

Committee members were also active at the Lodi Ag Fair earlier in July, volunteering around the fair and organizing the Barnyard Babies tent. Dane County Farm Bureau sponsored updated signage with agriculture facts for the Barnyard Babies tent.



Lindsey and Sarah at the Dane County Fair scavenger hunt, a fun way for fairgoers to learn facts about agriculture while walking through the exhibits.

## A Message from the President...



**Eric Wuthrich**  
Green County Farm Bureau President

When my grandmother signed me up to be a member of Green County Farm Bureau in 2021, I didn't know much about the organization. Fast forward three years and I am excited to serve as the Green County Farm Bureau president. While I may have only been involved with Farm Bureau for a few years, I have been very fortunate to be a part of the

Leadership Institute and WisGo Team.

Although I may not have grown up on a farm, my heart has always been in agriculture. Upon graduating from UW-River Falls with an agriculture business degree, I started my career as a district sales manager for AgriGold covering southwest Wisconsin. My wife and I currently live and farm on my grandparent's farm just outside of Monroe.

I am excited to see where Green County Farm Bureau will go! This year we were able to achieve a membership gain. It takes a team to achieve goals like this, and I am excited to be a part of a great group of leaders here in Green County.



Eric and Jaclyn Wuthrich

## Annual Meeting Highlights

Josh Schenk, past president

On August 21, Green County Farm Bureau held its annual meeting at the Albany Lions Club. The families of the coloring and essay contest winners, guests from the state legislature, guests from Rural Mutual Insurance, guests from Wisconsin Farm Bureau, along with agribusiness professional and farmer members enjoyed the evening with good company. Tess Zettle presented coloring contest winners (1st place - McKenlee Olsen from Northside Elementary in Monroe, 2nd place - Lucy Kent from Northside Elementary School in Monroe and 3rd place - Jase Luchsinger from Monticello School) and essay contest awards (1st place - Skye Baker from Monticello School, 2nd place - Leah McLoud from Monticello School, and 3rd place - Eestyn Homb from Monticello School). Sen. Howard Marklein provided an update on state budget and finance surrounding rural infrastructure and the remarkable reputation Farm Bureau members have with their senators and representatives. Jason Mugnaini, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's executive director of government relations, gave an update on current legislation affecting agriculture and the importance of members sharing personal experiences with legislators. The Friend of Agriculture Award was presented to the Green County Fairgrounds for continued support in hosting the Green County Farm Bureau Rural Safety Day. Members discussed and approved the following policy resolutions for review by the WFBF policy committee for addition and update to Wisconsin Farm Bureau Policy:

1. We support Farm Business Management training at the local technical college level, specifically geared towards active and beginning farmers and ranchers. This would include financial and business management training and support groups for active and beginning farmers. EDUCATION – TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM
2. We support farm and tractor safety education specifically geared towards 12 and 13 year old children that live and work on their own family farms with an emphasis on age-appropriate educational methods and curricula. EDUCATION – AG EDUCATION
3. We oppose certification of 12 and 13 year children for the purpose of driving tractors and implements of husbandry on public roadways. TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAYS
4. Revision of Education – Technical College System to remove p. 4, lines 1-3, and replace with: We support technical colleges offering safety courses for 14- and 15-year children to meet the Federal requirement for Tractor Safety Certification, with UW Extension playing a connector and professional development role and maintaining its partnership role with national curriculum providers including the Wisconsin Safe Operation of Tractor and Machinery Certification Program. EDUCATION – TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM



Dustin Williams presented the policy resolutions.



WFBF's Jason Mugnaini gave an update on current legislation affecting agriculture and the importance of members sharing personal experiences with legislators.



Past president Josh Schenk recognized outgoing board director Tess Zettle for her years of service.

## Welcome New Board of Directors: Abby Falk and Sharlene Swedlund

### Abby Falk

Abby was born and raised in Monroe on her family's farm, Falkland Farms. They have a carousel parlor, milking about 600 cows. She helps her mom, Katie, with herd/pregnancy check and paperwork. She helps her dad, Jeff, with the crop side, getting parts and taking nurse tanks from farm to farm. Abby graduated from Monroe in 2019. She is currently taking courses here and there at Blackhawk Technical College. She has also worked at M&D Truck and Equipment Sales LLC for the past two years, where she does the advertising and marketing. In her spare time, Abby likes to hang out with friends and family, go four-wheeling and go to Lake Wisconsin. She is willing to learn more and get involved in this great organization.

### Sharlene Swedlund, Young Farmer and Agriculturist Chair

Sharlene grew up on a farm south of Juda where she was actively involved in 4-H and FFA. With many years of involvement in agriculture, her dedication has earned her numerous accomplishments, including being named the 2016 Juda Dairy Queen, 2019 Miss United States Agriculture-SD, the 2022 Green County Fairest of the Fair and the 2023 Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs. Sharlene continues to make significant contributions to the agricultural sector as an agriculture marketing specialist at Lake Ridge Bank. Her commitment extends beyond her professional role, as she volunteers for various agricultural

organizations and serves on the Junior Fair Board Committee for Green County. Additionally, she is a dedicated member of the Executive FFA Alumni Board for Juda, where she tirelessly supports and mentors the next generation of agricultural leaders. Sharlene is looking forward to meeting even more people, connecting with other agriculturists and continuing to promote the agriculture industry. Outside of Sharlene's involvement with the agriculture industry, she also enjoys spending time with her fiancé, Tyler, two dogs and two cats. Though Sharlene traveled to 65 fairs last year, her travels reached outside of the state of Wisconsin as well! Sharlene has visited a total of 24 states! Both Sharlene and her fiancé have a goal to visit all 50 states by 2027!



Abby Falk



Sharlene Swedlund

## Family Farm Adventure at Cheese Days

Erin Mullet, vice president

On September 20-22, Green County Farm Bureau hosted the Family Farm Adventure tent at the biennial Cheese Days Festival in Monroe. The Family Farm Adventure tent showcases agriculture promotion and education through a variety of interactive stations including, but not limited to: agriculture trivia, milk a cow demonstration, cattle feed display, livestock animal size and by-products display, elevated corn box, agriculture photo booth, coloring pages and tattoos and, new this year, gravity wagon basketball.

Green County Farm Bureau also partnered with Blackhawk Technical College and Green County 4-H to provide information on their programming to attendees. The tent was filled with festivalgoers of all ages throughout the weekend.

Green County Farm Bureau would like to thank each of the volunteers who donated their time and resources to setting up and working the tent. The success of the tent is only possible with their strong support.

In addition to the volunteers, Green County Farm Bureau would like to thank the Cheese Days Festival for covering the cost of the tent, Blain's Farm and Fleet for donating the corn for the elevated corn box and the Dane County Agriculture Teachers for the use of the Milk-a-Cow demonstration materials.

Lastly, Green County Farm Bureau would like to thank each of the local businesses who sponsored the organization in 2024. With their sponsorship, Green County Farm Bureau was able to update materials for the tent, ensuring a great experience for participants.



## Farm Safety

Dustin Williams, chair

Farm and tractor safety has always been a focus of the educational efforts of Green County Farm Bureau. There are a number of programs that have been implemented, including tractor safety. This is also evident in the addition of the very successful Rural Safety Day event geared towards fifth grade students.

For a long time, the Wisconsin and National Tractor Safety Certification was taught through the collaborative efforts of local high school instructors, Green County Farm Bureau, UW Extension staff and Blackhawk Technical College staff. Thanks to those who helped teach over the years!

In 2021 Blackhawk Technical College took on the opportunity to start offering the Purdue University safety training at the Monroe Location of BTC. BTC instructor Dustin Williams worked with Cheryl Skjolaas, Wisconsin Farm Safety Director, and Alissa Grenawalt, Dane County Agriculture in the Classroom, to put together a hybrid model of instruction. Students attend 15 nightly 1-hour Zoom sessions and four face-to-face sessions to practice and complete their tractor driving test. The course consists of over 24 hours

of instruction and meets the federal and state requirements for tractor safety certification. Twenty students participated in the spring 2024 course. Students were 12-16 years of age and traveled from Rock, Green, Dane, Walworth, Lafayette and Dodge counties to participate.

Blackhawk Technical College also offers a full 3-credit course in ag equipment safety and operations as a required class in the 2-year agribusiness/science and technology associate degree program. This course is designed for students 18 years and older. It covers all aspects of farm safety and includes a tractor driving and equipment safety section as well. Farm Bureau continues to support these programs and offers assistance as needed. UW Extension gifted 2024 graduates with first aid kits to take home to their own operations. Farm Safety is an integral part of our industry. Green County Farm Bureau continues to advocate and promote farm safety in all programming. If you have questions about the tractor safety training offered at Blackhawk Technical College, please reach out to board member Dustin Williams at 608.439.8210 or dwilliams61@blackhawk.edu.

## Green County Farm Bureau's 6th Annual Rural Safety Day

Amy Austin, co-chair

On September 25, Green County Farm Bureau hosted our 6th Annual Rural Safety Day at the Green County Fairgrounds! This was our biggest year yet, with over 400 Green County fifth grade students and teachers joining us for the day! Schools present included Monroe, Juda, Monticello, New Glarus, Belleville and Brodhead.

Rural Safety Day invites fifth graders from all school districts in Green County to learn about safety from experts in their field. This year the stations

consisted of skid loader safety, animal safety, ATV/UTV safety, electrical safety, tractor/equipment/PTO safety, chemical safety, trailer/lawnmower safety, grain bin safety, fire safety and drone safety. Green County EMS joined us for a "How to Stop the Bleed" station. Green County Health Department addressed the risks of vaping at their station while a Green County Sheriff and K-9 made an appearance with a drug search demonstration. Students rotated through all the stations throughout the day, each lasting roughly 20 minutes.

Green County Farm Bureau thanks all the volunteers, sponsors and donors who made this day possible!





## A Message from the President...



**Tim Wellnitz**  
Rock County Farm Bureau President

Hello again everyone,  
I hope everyone's fall harvest season has been blessed with good yields, good weather and good times as it is an enjoyable time for most of us.

I would like to start by congratulating all 61 county Farm Bureaus in the state of Wisconsin for achieving a total membership gain! This is the first time since 1989 – 35 years ago. What a huge accomplishment. Keep spreading the word about the benefits of being a Farm Bureau member and keep up the great membership work!

We had our Rock County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting at the end of September. We had a GREAT turnout with good food and good people. We were able to fill all the vacant seats on our board from last year, which is a great accomplishment. I'd like to thank those who stepped up to fill

those positions, and I'd also like to thank all of our other board members for stepping up the past year to make things run smoothly while we were down a few board members.

As far as upcoming events, we have our District 2 Youth Ag Summit coming up fast which will be held here in Janesville at Blain Supply to teach FFA members about non-production agriculture careers. The WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference is coming up as well the weekend of December 6-9 at the Kalahari Convention Center and Resort in Wisconsin Dells. There will be some great speakers, workshops, entertainment, auctions and, as always, networking with your fellow members. Come join the fun!

As we prepare for the winter months to come, let us remain committed to supporting each other and our agriculture community. Thank you to everyone for your hard work and dedication and, remember, together we can face the challenges ahead and continue to thrive.

Wishing you all a successful harvest season and a Happy Holiday season with family and friends.

## Annual Meeting Highlights



The Rock County Farm Bureau annual meeting was held on September 23 at The Barn on Prairie in Janesville.



President Tim Wellnitz presented the Trailblazer Award to Andy McWilliams. This award is to recognize a member who has helped inspire other members and introduce new programs.



President Tim Wellnitz presented the Distinguished Service award to the Atkinson Family. This award is to recognize a person who has given a lifetime of service to the organization.



President Tim Wellnitz presented the Friend of Farm Bureau award to W. Hughes Farms GP (Randy and Judy Hughes Family). This award is to recognize a person or business who has gone above and beyond the call of duty.



Tim Wellnitz and Josh Peterson recognize Mary Hookham for her years of service to the Rock County Farm Bureau board of directors.



Jason Mugnaini, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation executive director of government relations, gave a memorable presentation.

## New Board of Directors: Becky Mueller and Phil Wellnitz

**Becky Mueller** and her husband Brad are dairy farmers in Rock County, milking a herd of 45 cows and raising all their replacement heifers. They have three girls: Brooke, Beni Jo and Brea. Becky has strong ties to the agriculture community being a former agriculture education instructor and FFA advisor prior to returning to dairy farming full-time. She is a member of the WFBF Leadership Institute Class XI. Her goals of being a part of the Rock County Farm Bureau board of directors is to advocate for small farmers, promote the importance of what they mean to the community and help make connections between communities and farmers that create positive relationships. In her free time, she enjoys presenting ag topics to schools and community groups.

**Phil Wellnitz** is a dairy farmer from Orfordville where he works alongside his family on their farm. Together, they manage a herd of 180 cows, raise all-breeding stock and engage in crop farming. With his wife, Hannah, Phil finds joy in raising their two sons, Philip and Winston. As a family man, he takes pride in sharing his passion for farming with the next generation, instilling in his boys a deep appreciation for raising animals and crops. In addition to their farm, Phil and Hannah operate a roadside farmstand, providing fresh produce

and goods to their community. Each day on the farm presents new challenges, but for Phil, this is part of the beauty of his work. He values the connection to nature and the responsibility of caring for his animals, believing that every day offers an opportunity to learn and grow.



Becky Mueller



The Wellnitz Family

## Agriculture in the Classroom

Stacy Skemp, chair

Agriculture in the Classroom this year worked closely with the Rock County FFA chapters to ensure that we had up-to-date contact information for every fourth and fifth grade teacher. The book of the year "I Love Strawberries" by Shannon Anderson was distributed to elementary school teachers in Rock County along with lesson plan resources. We had multiple entries for the fourth grade essay contest and hope next year we will have many more. Rock County had the state-winning fourth grade essay written by Eleanor Jones-Sato, a Roosevelt fourth grader.

The Milton FFA partnered with the Agriculture in the Classroom Committee to utilize the Farm Bureau's books of the year from the past to teach about agriculture in every Kindergarten-3rd grade classroom during the 2023-2024 school year. The Agriculture in the Classroom Committee is hoping to expand and partner with other Rock County FFA chapters to reach every Kindergarten-3rd grade classroom.

Every Rock County fourth grade classroom had the opportunity to take part in a Food for America program with the local FFA chapters and take a field trip out to a farm and learn about different facets of Rock County agriculture. If you are interested in joining our committee, please contact Stacy Skemp at [skemps@milton.k12.wi.us](mailto:skemps@milton.k12.wi.us).



## Agriculture Legislative Forum

Emily DeLong, co-chair

On September 4, Rock County Farm Bureau and the Ag Business Council of Rock County hosted their biennial Agriculture Legislative Forum at the Rock County 4-H Fairgrounds in Janesville. This event is hosted in hopes of asking candidates running for office questions about relevant agriculture issues that affect Rock County farmers. The evening started out with a picnic dinner of brats, hamburgers and potato salad. Roughly 40 members were in attendance.

Rep. Bryan Steil (R-1) started the evening forum by giving a quick update on the 2024 Farm Bill and his hope that it will be finalized before the end of the year. Wisconsin assembly candidates in attendance were John Henderson (D-31), Scott Johnson (R-43), Brienne Brown (D-43), Bruce Danielson (R-44), Ann Roe (D-44) and Clinton Anderson (D-45). Each candidate was able to give a brief background as well as state why they were running. They were then asked questions about rural school funding, ethanol and biofuels as well as solar panels. The main discussion of the night and audience questions revolved around solar panels. Thank you to all the members who attended and helped make the night a success!

A special thank you to Kirk Leach for grilling, Jim Raymond for moderating and Tim Bremel of Big Radio for providing us with a sound system for the event.



## Curtis, Reed, Schultz and Washkoviak Among Scholarship Recipients

Stacy Skemp, chair

**Emilie Curtis** is the daughter of William and Gina Curtis of Janesville. Emilie is currently attending the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse studying physiology, sociology and criminal justice. Emilie's ideal career is one where she can help as many people as possible. Her current focus is on psychology, but she cannot pinpoint a specific career path just yet. What remains constant is her desire to make a positive impact on others' lives. Agriculture has had a profound impact on her life, shaping her values and aspirations in many ways. Emilie grew up having the privilege of witnessing the dedication and relentless effort that farmers put into their work. Emilie saw firsthand the long hours they invest to ensure that others have access to fresh, healthy food. Those observations have deepened her appreciation for the agricultural community but have also inspired her to consider how she can contribute to the wellbeing of others. Emilie hopes that one day she can make a meaningful impact on the lives of others just as many agriculturalists have done.

**Devon Reed** is the son of Mark and Kasey Reed of Milton. Devon recently graduated from Madison College and is employed at Johnson Tractor. Devon's ideal career would be working with farmers to clean and repair their equipment, so they get the most out of their purchases for their farm needs. His career would also be flexible in order to allow him to help his great uncle,

dad and brothers on their family farm. Devon is the fifth generation to operate the family farm. Agriculture has impacted him greatly by allowing him to meet great people and has taught him responsibility and leadership.

**Erik Schultz** is the son of Rod and Elaine Schultz of Janesville. Erik is currently enrolled at Black Hawk Technical College in the agriculture business department at the Monroe campus. Erik's ideal career is operating his family dairy farm in Whitewater. He has had the opportunity to work on the family farm throughout his life and show the cattle at various shows. Agriculture has impacted him greatly by allowing him to pursue his love of production agriculture. He has met many people through the agriculture community and gained skills that he can apply to everyday life operating a dairy farm.

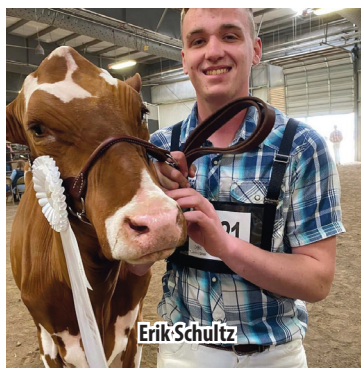
**Noelle Washkoviak** is the daughter of Dan and Robin Washkoviak of Janesville. Noelle is a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin-Lacrosse majoring in marketing. Noelle's ideal career is to obtain a career in marketing, ideally in the fashion industry. She hopes to leverage both her communication and creative skills to enable the company she works for to achieve the company goals. Agriculture and the entire agriculture community have made a significant impact on her life. The nourishment provided by those in the industry, allow my mind and body to operate at their highest levels. This enables me to meet the academic goals I have set for myself, while also maintaining a healthy lifestyle.



Emilie Curtis



Devon Reed



Erik Schultz



Noelle Washkoviak

## Focus on Agriculture

Tim Wellnitz, committee member

In July we held our Focus on Agriculture event at W. Hughes Farms GP in Janesville. Several local legislators joined us to discuss concerns about agriculture and potential solutions. This year the state is going through redistricting making it even more important that our legislators join us, so we'd like to thank them for taking the time to come out to the farm.

The agricultural sector is currently experiencing a period of transformation driven by technological advancements, changing climate conditions and evolving market dynamics. Here are a couple things we discussed while at Hughes Farm:

1. We had a small tour of some of their precision equipment that they are implementing into their operation. We discussed how those pieces of equipment each play a vital role in the organic and conventional side of their

operation. Technology is becoming a large part of farming with farmers using GPS, drones and data analytics to optimize crop yields and reduce resource use.

2. Farmers are forced/required to operate with very tight margins. Volatility in commodity prices is influenced by many factors such as supply chain disruptions and trade policies as well as the cost of supplies and the equipment needed to get the crops in and out of the field all make these margins a little tighter.



Wisconsin agriculture contributes over \$100 billion to the state's economy, employs around 350,000 people in various roles and remains a cornerstone of Wisconsin's economy with robust dairy production, significant crop yields and a diverse range of livestock operations. This makes it crucial to maintain the involvement of our legislators and keep agriculture on their minds every day.

# Rock County

wfbf.com/about/counties/rock  
RockCountyFarmBureau

## YFA is Rockin' in Rock County

Brooke Trustem, chair

What an amazing year for Rock County Farm Bureau! The Young Farmers and Agriculturists Committee had another great year filled with fun events locally and statewide. From a fun axe-throwing activity to volunteering at the Rock County Farm Bureau food stand at the fair, YFA members enjoyed making new connections and visiting with old friends. I am excited to focus on the future and continue with fellow Rock County Farm Bureau board members and coordinate more events in our county. Look for new social and service events coming this fall!

On another YFA related topic, three of our Rock County YFA members were selected as the top four finalists for their respective award areas. Jacob

and Eliza Bobolz are finalists in the Farming for the Future award. This award recognizes YFA members who excel in their farm involvement, future goals, leadership abilities and participation in Farm Bureau and other organizations.

"This year's finalists are innovative leaders in Wisconsin's farming community," said WFBF President Brad Olson. "We are excited to recognize young farmers who are advancing the future of agriculture."

Additionally, I have been selected as a top finalist for the Outstanding Agriculture Professional award which is based on members of Farm Bureau's YFA Program who excel in their leadership abilities, agriculture involvement and participation in Farm Bureau and other civic and service organizations.

Thank you for another "rockin" year with Rock County Farm Bureau!



Jacob and Eliza Bobolz are finalists for the YFA Farming for the Future award.



Brooke Trustem is a finalist for the YFA Outstanding Ag Professional award and YFA Discussion Meet.

# Sauk County

wfbf.com/about/counties/sauk  
SaukCountyFarmBureau

## A Message from the President...



**Kat Peper**  
Sauk County Farm Bureau President

I'm thrilled to be serving the next year as the president of the Sauk County Farm Bureau! It's hard to believe that it's been nine years since I moved to Wisconsin. Sauk County Farm Bureau has truly

become such an important part of my life.

When I first joined Farm Bureau, it was to meet other farmers and agriculturists in my new hometown. Little did I know how much of an impact it would have! Over the years, I've held several roles at the county level like YFA chair, Promotion and Education chair and secretary, while also serving on various committees. I've had the privilege of being involved at the state and national levels too, as the District 2 YFA Representative, YFA Committee Chair, WFBF Board of Director and a member of the WFBF Policy Development Committee.

Through opportunities like the WFBF Leadership Institute and AFBF Women's Bootcamp, I've grown personally and professionally, building friendships and connections with people both locally and across the country. It's also given me the confidence to be a strong voice for agriculture—a passion

that has stayed with me since my days showing cattle at county fairs and serving as a California Dairy Princess.

Advocacy has always been close to my heart and Farm Bureau has opened the door to many opportunities, from bringing local news to our farm to talk about the importance of county fairs, to testifying before the state legislature on health plans for farmers, to speaking before the county Land Resources and Environment Department about the impact of proposed manure ordinance changes, and even flying to Washington, D.C. to meet with lawmakers.

Since becoming president of the Sauk County Farm Bureau, I had the opportunity to help facilitate candidate interviews for the 40th Assembly District in collaboration with Columbia County Farm Bureau. Additionally, I participated in a town hall with American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall and other county Farm Bureau presidents from

across the country, where we discussed key issues impacting agriculture on a national level. These experiences have been invaluable in ensuring our local voices are heard and represented in broader policy conversations.

I'm honored and excited to take this next step as Sauk County Farm Bureau's president. I look forward to working alongside an incredible board of directors to continue being the trusted voice for agriculture here in Sauk County!



Kat Peper and AFBF President Zippy Duvall

## Annual Meeting Highlights



Sixty-nine members gathered at Narrows Creek Winery in Loganville for the county annual meeting on August 22.



Sauk County Farm Bureau members celebrated retiring board members Mike Turner and Galen Alwin during the county annual meeting. With a combined 50 years of service to Sauk County Farm Bureau, we hope you'll also help us recognize their service!



Bradley Uken, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's chief administrative officer, gave a memorable presentation.



Karen Reisinger presented Payten Lindloff with her scholarship certificate.

## Finke and Lindloff Selected as Scholarship Recipients

This year's scholarships were awarded to Cassidy Finke and Payten Lindloff.

**Cassidy Finke** is a graduate from the Reedsburg Area High School. She is currently attending the University of Wisconsin-Platteville where she is studying animal science with pre-vet. Cassidy has been involved with the Reedsburg FFA Chapter previously serving in the officer roles of treasurer and vice president.

**Payten Lindloff** is a recent graduate from Baraboo High School. She is currently attending the University of Wisconsin-River Falls where she plans to major in animal science. Payten's end goal is to become a livestock nutritionist. She has been an active member of the Mirror Lake 4-H club and Baraboo FFA chapter.



Payton Lindloff

## Meet Your New Board Directors



Tommy Allen

Tommy Allen farms near Reedsburg with his uncle Chad and grandpa David. Together, the family raises Registered Jerseys, beef cattle, sheep, cash crops and also installs garage doors. Tommy is married to his beautiful wife Amanda, who teaches at Richland Center High School. The couple has a 2-year-old daughter named Cora.



Angela Phelps

Angela Phelps and her husband own a small beef herd outside Rock Springs. She enjoys volunteering and staying current on political topics related to farming.



Jackie Wilkinson

Jackie Wilkinson, her husband Greg and their four children farm in Loganville. They grow crops and raise beef, pork, lamb, chickens, turkeys, ducks and produce. They sell directly to consumers and enjoy sharing about the farming lifestyle with consumers.

## Food Stand a Huge Success

Brady Peper, chair

Hello everyone, I am Brady Peper, and it was once again a privilege to be the chair of the Food Stand Committee. First let me take the time to thank every person that chose to donate their precious time and energy into making this year's fair food stand efforts, yet again, a huge success. Without you, this would not be even remotely close to possible. We were able to make a few changes in the stand, such as adding a counter space for condiments away from windows where people order and receive their food. We were also able to get a new refrigerator in the stand for storing our food items. Also, you may have noticed we were taking all our orders through an iPad system. This has helped me track items sold and gives us a ton of information on how we can better serve our customers.

Lastly, it would be remiss of me not to give the greatest of thanks and praise to a guy who has been a staple in almost every effort of the Sauk County Farm Bureau. Galen Alwin has been one of the largest contributing factors to the success of the food stand for longer than I can remember. Words cannot describe how grateful I am for everything he has taught me and helped me with over the last few years of trying to run this thing. If you happen to see him somewhere, please thank him for all he's done and wish him a happy retirement from the board.

With that being said, we are always looking for more volunteers to help in the stand. You can call or text me at 608.415.3752 if wish to do so. As always, hope you all have a wonderful day and thank you!



Tammy Nolden, Brady Peper and Craig Sandmire prepare the best food on the fairgrounds in the Sauk County Farm Bureau food stand.



Tommy Brennan and Nancy Liegel serve cream puffs.

## A Year of Growth and Celebration: Highlights from Agriculture in the Classroom

Nancy Liegel, chair

Hi, just a note from Nancy Liegel, Sauk County's Agriculture in the Classroom coordinator. Our team serves second graders in the Baraboo, Reedsburg, River Valley and Sauk Prairie school districts. The 2023-2024 school year was fantastic!

This year the fourth and fifth grade classes participated in the AITC essay contest and Sauk County had 278 participants. Sauk County was so lucky to win the Flex Farm hydroponic system. It was awarded to Prairie Ridge Intermediate School in Reedsburg. Thanks to Dana Westedt for all the hard work as one of my volunteers.

I also had a busy month of June celebrating June Dairy month with attending Harrisburg School Dairy Days with string cheese and milk to give out. Sauk County Dairy Breakfast at United Dreams Dairy was another great day but soggy. I also had a table of goodies and "spin the wheel of agriculture" game at Butterfest Days in Reedsburg.

It's always fun to be with the kids and agriculture! Don't you want to join the team and help? 2024-2025 is going to be a super year and with many new adventures on board.



Agriculture in the Classroom celebrated June Dairy Month at the dairy breakfast.

## Promotion and Education Committee Makes an Impact on Community

Sarah Hetke, chair

The Promotion and Education Committee had a busy year! We have a small but mighty committee that makes these events possible. We encourage other members to join us so we can make an even greater impact throughout the county.

In May the committee assembled a beef grilling prize basket that was given away through a random drawing hosted at McFarlanes' in Sauk City. One winner was selected and awarded the basket to enjoy during beef month and throughout the summer grilling season.

June Dairy Month was also a busy time for our group. We went to the Harrisburg School to highlight Agriculture in the Classroom materials and provided milk cartons to visitors. Additionally, we hosted the second Wisco Wine and Cheese with Balanced Rock Winery. This event featured Sauk County cheesemakers Carr Valley Cheese and Cedar Grove Creamery along with Arena Cheese. Their cheese samples were paired with wine from Balanced Rock. Attendees were able to try unique cheeses like butterkase, gouda and fontina which exposed them to new flavors. There were about 50 attendees at the event, which helped drive donations from the proceeds to the Farmer

Angel Network (\$250), Beyond Blessed Pantry (\$250) and Sauk County Farm Bureau Promotion and Education committee (\$250).

We are currently hosting a brand new event - a milk drive! We have generated more than \$500 in early donations to provide milk for Sauk County school students. Providing 13 nutrients to support students' learning and development, milk is an essential part of healthy meals, and many students do not have access to this nutritional powerhouse. Just \$1 can purchase 3 cartons of milk for students! Donations of all amounts are welcome. The first \$750 is being matched by Sauk County Farm Bureau and Rural Mutual Insurance: Daryl Pulfus Agency. Here is the link to learn more or donate <https://gofund.me/b72ae36b>.

We will again be looking to host a holiday porch pot class and are considering adding dates and locations based on the success we saw last year.

We're looking forward to continuing to plan activities and welcome more members to join us. If you or another member you know wants to help plan promotion and education events, please encourage them to reach out to Sarah Hetke (612.388.7717), Kat Peper (209.639.1715) or Nancy Liegel (608.963.2511).



The first \$750 of the milk drive is being matched by Sauk County Farm Bureau and Rural Mutual Insurance: Daryl Pulfus Agency. Here is the link to learn more or donate <https://gofund.me/b72ae36b>.



The 2nd Annual Wisco Wine and Cheese with Balanced Rock Winery was held on June 28.



Wisco Wine and Cheese featured Sauk County cheesemakers Carr Valley Cheese and Cedar Grove Creamery along with Arena Cheese.

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