



Grassroots

District 4 News

Gratitude Helps the Attitude!



Joe Bragger

District 4 Director

“Research has shown that the practice of gratitude is associated with many positive effects in a person’s physical and mental health. Expressing gratitude can improve sleep, mood and immunity, and can decrease depression, anxiety, chronic pain and disease.”

- American Heart Association

As the days grow shorter and colder and the year is drawing to a close, it can be easy to focus on why my soybeans underperformed or why I didn’t lock in a higher milk price. This is a normal practice, especially at year’s end when we take stock of our affairs and look to the future.

There are also many things to be thankful for personally. I was able to welcome a beautiful granddaughter to this world and watch a family grow. The joy I see in my wife Noel is truly wonderful. Yes, as new grandparents we are entering a new chapter in our lives.

From a Farm Bureau perspective, we have reached new highs in membership with every county in the state attaining a membership gain.

With over 51,000 members, we now get an additional delegate at the National Convention to help push Wisconsin farmers’ ideas forward. Wisconsin Farm Bureau has a fully functioning Foundation Board of Trustees that will help to ensure that great programs like Agriculture in the Classroom, Leadership Institute and other member-supportive programming continue well into the future. Additionally, Wisconsin Farm Bureau has a new member database. If you have not visited the Wisconsin Farm Bureau website to create your member account and get access to your benefits, please do so. The member database will prove to be very valuable when we need to mobilize members to advance our agricultural priorities.

Finally, I am so grateful to all of you for giving of your time, talent and treasure to ensure that agriculture and farming is alive and well within our district. There are so many achievements in every issue of this newsletter that would not happen if it weren’t for the extra effort you put forward after a hard day to go to a meeting or event. The drive and commitment from all of you, both on and off the farm, is truly amazing. Celebrate success! THANK YOU!!!

As always... enough is too much,
Joe Bragger

District 4 Farm Bureau Memembers Selected for Leadership Institute

Two District 4 agricultural leaders have been selected to participate in the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Leadership Institute. This year-long leadership training program’s mission is to develop strong and effective agricultural leaders.

Casey Denk Weltzien, 2022-2023 Wisconsin FFA President from Mondovi and a UW-River Falls graduate, was selected to represent Buffalo County Farm Bureau. Buffalo County Farm Bureau received a second representative when Collin Weltzien from Arcadia was also selected. Weltzien, the 2019-2020 Wisconsin FFA President continues Buffalo County Farm Bureau’s strong push to foster leadership at the state level. Denk and Weltzien are the eighth and ninth individuals to represent Buffalo County in the Leadership Institute.

“It is important that farmers and agriculturists step up as advocates for their farms and agribusinesses,” said WFBF Senior Director of Member Relations Wendy Volkert. “The Leadership Institute equips participants with the skills and confidence to shape the future of farming and agriculture, both within their county

Farm Bureau and in their broader communities.”

Members of the 2025 WFBF Leadership Institute class are Jason Behrend, Wisconsin Rapids; Alana Biermeier, Mauston; Ann Brost, Walworth; Grant Buwalda, Waupun; Casey Denk Weltzien, Mondovi; David Foerster, Oostburg; Mary Fronek, Antigo; Allison Gorr, Albany; Eric Harmann, Algoma; Katie Koeppel, Mishicot; Austin Sandmire, North Freedom; Joe Schlies, Denmark; Jeremy Skemp, Columbus; Amy VanderMark, Elroy; and Collin Weltzien, Arcadia.

The WFBF Leadership Institute consists of five multi-day sessions that provide hands-on learning on agricultural issues, leadership development and speaking skills, interaction with Farm Bureau staff and government leaders at the state and national levels and networking with other participants. The class capstone event will be a trip, with the WFBF Board of Directors, to Washington, D.C. in March 2026. The Institute is sponsored in part by the Wisconsin Soybean Marketing Board.



Colin Weltzien



Casey Denk

District 4 News

District 4 Discussion Meeting and Policy Meeting

Waumandee Country Bar played host to a Farm Bureau member filled crowd on August 15 for the Young Farmers and Agriculturists Discussion Meet. The contestants were Cullen Schlewitz, Emily Oates, Andrea Schlais, Collin Weltzien and Kori Blank. The five YFA members from four different counties (Monroe, Eau Claire, Buffalo and Trempealeau) discussed 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 Young Farmers and Ranchers as they strengthen their businesses?”

The contest had an opening section (30-second opening statement), a body section (25-minutes of open discussion) and a closing section (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 on dealing with diversification. Discussion centered on practical ways to attract some of the best ways to get money into agriculture. The closings included action items on how the ideas could be put into motion.

Judges for the evening included Tim Wucherer of the Eau Claire Land

Department; Brenda Dowiasch of the USDA Clark County Farm Service Agency and Steve Strey of Premier Auction Service. A big thank you goes out to these judges for donating their valuable time. The three contestants selected to continue on to competition at the WFBF Annual Meeting includes Emily Oates, Collin Weltzien and Andrea Schais.

Activities continued as District 4 Director Joe Bragger opened the annual Policy Meeting by opening the floor for new resolutions. Members from District 4 county Farm Bureaus presented ideas and determined the initial offerings that started as main ideas. Many of them reflected the technology applications to the agriculture industry including foreign ownership, finance and impacts on the use of energy. Members had strong feelings about 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 some resolutions when all points were discussed. The final list of resolutions from District 4 will consist of approved items from the Policy Meeting along with approved resolutions added from each county meeting. The entire package will be submitted to state delegates at the WFBF Annual Meeting. The resolutions that pass with majority votes will be published in the 2024 Farm Bureau Policy Book adopted by the delegates of the 105th Wisconsin Farm Bureau Annual Meeting.



Joe Bragger presenting and contestants receiving instructions on discussion meet.



Emily Oates addressing the topic for the competition.



Kori Blank speaking to group with her closing statement.



Cullen Schlewitz concluding the contest with a powerful statement.

Zimdars Promoted to WFBF's Director of Local Government

Nate Zimdars has been named Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's Director of Local Government. This role replaces the Member Advocacy and Issues Coordinator. The redefined role will be one that works closely with county Farm Bureaus and assisting volunteers on local government issues. Additionally, he will work with members who have an interest in and running for local public office.

“As someone who was an active county Farm Bureau member and served in local government, I recognize the value this position will bring to members across the state,” said Zimdars. “We must ensure that our members have the tools they need to successfully advocate for Wisconsin agriculture, and I am excited to help them do so through this new role.”

Zimdars has worked as the Governmental Relations Administrative Assistant for WFBF since February 2024.



Nate Zimdars, Director of Local Government

“We’re excited to have Nate take on this redefined role as Director of Local Government,” said WFBF Executive Director of Government Relations Jason Mugnaini. “With his background in agriculture and dedication to public service, Nate is well-equipped to support our county Farm Bureaus and empower members interested in local office. His leadership will be invaluable in strengthening our grassroots advocacy efforts and help members navigate local government issues.”

Zimdars grew up on a small hobby farm outside of Ripon, raising sheep and poultry. He attended UW-Fond du Lac and UW-Madison majoring in political science and history. Prior to joining the WFBF staff, he was a Farm Broadcaster with the MidWest Farm Report and a machine operator for Emmi Roth Cheese in Stoughton. Zimdars lives in Madison.

District 4 News

District 4 Promotion and Education Holds Fall Frolic Event

The District 4 Promotion and Education Committee held the Fall Frolic event on September 28, celebrating a perfect activity on the perfect day. Bright sunshine and warm temperatures allowed for fulfilling travel of the Eau Claire area to visit some of the most popular seasonal places to see.

The Fall Frolic started with a visit to Outlaw Farms and their fall vendor fair. Brenda Dowiasch, P&E Chair and organizer of the activity, set up the Gather Wisconsin booth to share Farm Bureau's producer-to-consumer story. Many consumers and some producers stopped to take the food preference survey which is a visual vote using puffballs to show what is important for an individual's food choices. People from Eau Claire, Winona, LaCrosse and the surrounding area stopped for the poll and shared conversation surrounding the topic of food. A successful poll was exhibited by the full mason jars that voters dropped their choice of

puffball into.

The next stop on the tour was Connel's Orchard, which is one of the oldest operating orchards in the area. Our group participated in a hayride that allowed us to visit many varieties of apples along with the other fruit in the orchard. Our tour guide gave us the history of the farm along with their growing techniques and current production stats. The 25-minute trip around the farm was the highlight of the orchard visit.

Dixon's Autumn Harvest Winery was the final stop on the Fall Frolic. Flights of wine were made available for all legal consumers along with a chance to listen to the band "SAGE". The wine was excellent. The band continued way beyond their scheduled time to make the event extra special. At conclusion of the event, there was a mad dash to make it to Clear Water Town Hall for Eau Claire County's annual meeting. Great time was had by all!



Touring the Connel Orchard by hayride was a great way to see everything.



The Fall Frolic group with the beautiful orchard in the background.



Group shot at the entrance to the winery at Dixon's Autumn Harvest.

Leadership Boot Camp

Brenda Dowiasch

How do you connect with people during your weekly routine? We all are creatures of habit as we rush around with our busy schedules. We can be found shopping at the local grocery store or picking the kids up at school after practice. When we are crossing paths with folks in our local communities how are we connecting with them?

Members from across the state made the trip to Tomah on October 26 for Leadership Boot Camp. The program this year focused on "Engaging your Consumer Audience."

Kelsey Henderson, the 58th Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs shared about "Building Meaningful Connections." She shared her role as an agricultural ambassador and why making connections is so important to her. Kelsey shared a story about meeting a little girl and her family at the local county fair. She took the time to visit with the family and shared tickets with them to the Wisconsin State Fair. This interaction turned out to be a meaningful connection and an even more significant trip to the State Fair for this family.

We learned about "Engaging Consumers through Direct Marketing" from Lois Federman of Something Special from Wisconsin. She provided

information on Alice in Dairyland and the program available through Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). We took a look at the Wisconsin Local Food Marketing Guide. This gave an overview of how to get started marketing local products and the resources available. More information can be found online at datcp.wi.gov.

A panel discussion on "Promoting Consumer-Focused Events," was hosted by four county leaders, including Heather Erdman from Eau Claire County. We had the opportunity to

learn about events that are hosted in their counties and districts with the Promotion and Education Committee. It was a great time to share ideas and take notes. We learned to keep working on growing events in our area. It's important not to be discouraged and to have fun sharing with others.

The day wrapped up with the Field to Fork Faceoff, hosted by Director of the Bureau Foundation John Hromyak. This game was a fun educational way to learn about agriculture – in addition to a few good laughs.

Take time to say hi to someone you don't know and share something about yourself. It can be as simple as introducing yourself to someone while waiting in line at the store. When we engage with people we make connections and you just never know who you might make a meaningful connection with.



Buffalo County Annual Meeting Brings Members Together

August 22 turned out to be an excellent day to bring Farm Bureau members together to celebrate a year of Farm Bureau success. A large crowd including Sen. Rob Stafsholt, Assembly candidate Terry Schoonover; RMIC Agent Steve Berger, RMIC Agent Emily Kaltenberg, WFBF District 4 Promotion and Education Chair Brenda Dowiasch, WFBF District 4 Director – Joe Bragger, and WFBF District 4 Coordinator Kevin Whalen were in attendance for the proceedings.

The evening began with an invocation from Buffalo County Vice-President Faith Pronschinske. An outstanding dinner was served by Emily Kaltenberg and Faith Pronschinske. All food was prepared by the Waumandee Country Bar and Grill. At the conclusion of the meal, Ed Rippley introduced the guests to the attendance. The members of the board of directors introduced themselves.

The first major presentation was guest speaker, Steve Boe, State Director of Farm to Power, who presented on solar farms and compatibility with traditional farming. He included suggestions for people looking to lease land for solar farms. Following the solar presentation was Joe Bragger awarding the Outstanding Farm Family to the Weltzien Farms. Two generations of three brothers with their families each stepped forward for this prestigious recognition. Rob Stafsholt introduced himself as the new senator in District 10. He spoke about his strengths and qualifications for the position. Terry Schoonover, District 29th candidate, introduced himself and summarized his candidacy.

Next on the agenda was the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation committee reports. Brenda Dowiasch, District P & E chair, gave the Promotion and Education report for the district. The county Young Farmer and Agriculturist report was presented by Collin Weltzien. Kevin Whalen, WFBF District 4 coordinator, spoke on using the membership

portal. Joe Bragger, WFBF District 4 Director, spoke on resolutions and board structure.

The business meeting commenced with the basics getting taken care of first. Minutes of last year's meeting was first on the docket. Motion by Joe Bragger and seconded by Chris Ellis to approve the 2023 annual meeting minutes. Motion carried. Finances were the next up. Motion by Joe Bragger and seconded by Jan Schaffner to approve the 2024 financial report. The motion carried.

Elections were next in line to accomplish. State delegates to the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Annual meeting were the first to be elected. Nominations were opened. Motion made and seconded to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Bob Sendelbach, Collin Weltzien, Kyle Danzinger. Motion carried. Motion made and seconded to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot. Motion carried. Alternates selected were Dustin Ellis and Pat Danzinger. YFA proceedings were as follows. : Nominations were opened. Collin Weltzien was nominated. Allison Bragger was nominated. Ballot was taken. Steve Boe and Jan Schaffner were selected as vote counters. Collin Weltzien was the top vote getter to receive the position of YFA chair. Buffalo County Promotion and Education Chair Emily Kaltenberg was re-elected. In the board of director elections, nominations were opened. Faith Pronschinske, Pat Danzinger, Michelle Brevitz, Allison Doenier, and Doug Olson were nominated. Motion made and seconded to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for all nominations. Motion carried. The final item of business was the resolutions. Twenty-two resolutions were presented. Two additional were added from the floor. All twenty-four were approved to be sent to the state annual meeting.



Ed Rippley with the Outstanding Farm Family.



Promotion and Education Chair Brenda Dowiasch presenting district report.



Joe Bragger presenting at the Buffalo County annual meeting.



RMIC Agent Steve Berger presenting at Buffalo County annual meeting.

Buffalo County Land Judging



2024 Quad County Land Judging Contest

- Team #1 - Arcadia**
TOTAL Team Score: 1,084
- Team #2 - Alma**
TOTAL Team Score: 992
- Team #3 - Elmwood**
TOTAL Team Score: 983
- Team #4 - Menomonie**
TOTAL Team Score: 900
- Team #5 - Boyceville**
TOTAL Team Score: 889

2nd Annual Buffalo County Farm Bureau Golf Tournament

The 2nd Annual Buffalo County Farm Bureau Golf Tournament was held July 18 at The Grove Golf Course in Cochrane. Emily Kaltenberg, activity chair, was able to recruit eighteen teams and twelve hole sponsors for the event with her enthusiastic committee members.

The day was bright and sunny with Farm Bureau members in several contests throughout the day as well as a meal for all the competitors. 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 drive on hole one to Best Chipping. The best dressed went to the Pronschinske-Ellis gals.



President's Message



Brenda Dowiasch
Eau Claire County Farm Bureau President

We have so much to celebrate here in Eau Claire County!

As we gathered for another annual meeting, I wanted to thank you for attending. A special thank you goes to Lisa Pettis for organizing our meal and decorations again this year.

Reflecting over the past year, we have really done some amazing things in Eau Claire County! Just touching on a few events that are on the top of my list:

- We had another successful spring with the Agriculture in the Classroom program. Our volunteers connected with students in the Augusta School District.
- In May we put together a new event, "Beef Night Out." This was a huge success with 300 in attendance. It was exciting to see folks connect farming, family and food at this event. We enjoyed a delicious meal and a tour of Off the Rail Meats.
- In June and July, the Eau Claire County Breakfast on the Farm was hosted at Bischoff Farms near Eau Claire. Eau Claire County Farm Bureau was excited to be there to connect with folks from around the area. We attended the Augusta Bean & Bacon Days as well as the Fall Creek Fun Fest parades with our award-winning float. Our theme was

"Shaking Things Up on the Farm." We handed out cheese curds to all the parade attendees. We got a 2nd place ribbon for our float at Fall Creek Fun Fest. We also attended the Eau Claire County Fair Livestock Auction. We weren't able to purchase an animal this year, but we were there to celebrate 100 years with our fellow friends of agriculture.

• We continue to grow our membership and reached our goal again this year. A special thank you to all the membership workers that make this happen. I would like to recognize Steven Erdman for his efforts again this year to support the growth of this organization. He will be recognized in December at the WFBF Annual Meeting that will be held in Wisconsin Dells.

There are many long hours spent working on committees or attending board meetings. Your hard work doesn't go unnoticed. Thank you to Kevin Whalen who keeps us organized and follows up on endless questions. We can't forget Joe Bragger, our District 4 Director, supporting our ideas and grassroots efforts.

We are one big family, working together to achieve great things. It has been an honor to serve you all over the past year as the Eau Claire County President.

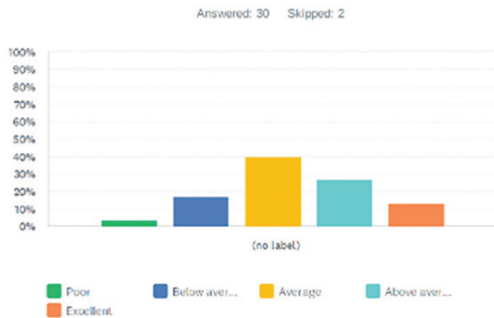
Wishing you all a safe fall and harvest season. God Bless!

Mark and Terri Karow Host Ag Literacy Tour on Their Family Farm

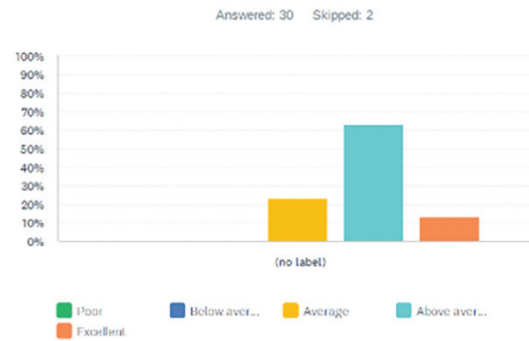
Mark and Terri Karow hosted the Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce leadership training for young leaders on September 12 and did a great job telling agriculture's story. All attendees greatly appreciated Mark and Terri's presentations with one attendee writing, "Mark and Terri did a wonderful job and provided so many great facts that many wouldn't know if they have never been apart of the ag community! This was the best stop of the day!" Another attendee wrote, "This was very eye opening for me. I honestly know absolutely nothing about the dairy industry or

farming in general so to hear small family farmers talk about their farm was great. Mark and Terri were so welcoming and really taught me a ton on the industry. I wish this stop could have been longer as people were still asking great questions but we had to get back on the bus. I hope this stop continues to be on the agenda in the future." To give perspective on how impactful this tour was, take a look at the graphs below which demonstrate the leaders' levels of understanding before and after the tour.

Q8 Please rate your level of understanding of dairy farming PRIOR to LEC.



Q9 Please rate your level of understanding of dairy farming AFTER LEC.



Mark Karow presenting in field.



Terri Karow speaking on calves.



Mark explaining cow care.

Eau Claire Celebrates with Annual Meeting

The meeting started with the invocation by board director Matt Krenz. President Brenda Dowiasch followed with the introduction of the guests.

The next portion of the meeting was a delicious meal of chicken, hot dogs and hamburgers which was 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. Barbi Manter spoke to the group about Rural Mutual Insurance Company's current business situation. Numbers are up across the board for policies and membership. The District 4 Coordinator and District 4 Director were next up with presentations on how the Eau Claire County Farm Bureau has helped to lead the direction of the statewide organization with their many active members on multiple state committees. Michelle Magadance Skinner spoke on her qualifications for the 91st District Assembly. Scholarships were presented to Brian Zimmerman and Jillian Schlewitz.

Elections were the next item on the agenda. Nominations were opened for WFBF Annual Meeting delegates. Brenda Dowiasch and Steve Strey

were nominated. Lisa Pettis motioned to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Brenda Dowiasch and Steve Strey. This motion was

seconded by Tim Wucherer and the motion carried. Nominations were opened for the Promotion and Education chair position. Lisa Pettis was nominated by Steve Strey. There was then a motion to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Lisa Pettis. This motion was seconded by Mark Karow and the motion carried. Nominations were opened for the Young Farmers and Agriculturists chair position. Heather Erdman was nominated by Lisa Pettis. There was a motion to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Heather Erdman. This motion was seconded by Mark Karow and the motion carried. Only one board director was up for re-election. Matt Krenz was re-elected unanimously for a three-year term. Twenty-one resolutions were presented and an amendment was applied to one resolution. There was a motion by Lisa Pettis which was seconded by Matt Krenz to approve all the proposed resolutions. The motion carried.

Door prizes were handed out to conclude the meeting. Door prizes included beautiful table centerpieces.



The annual meeting was held at Clear Creek Town North of Strum.

Jackson County Annual Meeting

The Jackson County Farm Bureau annual meeting was held September 22 on Steve and Pat Kling's farm in rural Taylor. District 4 Director Joe Bragger started the event by delivering the invocation. Jackson County Farm Bureau president introduced the guests which included District 4 Director Joe Bragger, CEO and Executive Vice President of Rural Mutual Insurance Company Dan Merk, Wisconsin FFA President Jaycee Thompson, Wisconsin FFA Secretary Jazmin Wagner and District 4 Farm Bureau Coordinator Kevin Whalen.

Presentations began with guest speakers Jaycee Thompson and Jazmin Wagner who gave their address on the benefits of membership in both the Farm Bureau and the FFA. The two highlighted the importance of leadership and skill development provided by Farm Bureau and FFA in equipping individuals to effectively serve the agricultural community. Our guest speaker followed with a summary of the exceptional year that both Farm Bureau and Rural Mutual Insurance are enjoying. Mr. Merk noted the young crowd at the annual meeting and the enthusiasm it encouraged. Following the special guest speaker, Kevin Whalen spoke on the magic of being positive. Speeches were completed by Director Bragger informing the attendees on changes that the new membership portal will allow.

The business meeting commenced with the approval of the minutes of last year's meeting. There was a motion by Leonard Olson which was seconded by Luke Trapp to approve the 2023 annual meeting minutes. The motion carried. Finances were completed with the approval of the financial report. There was a motion by Steve Kling which was seconded by Luke Trapp to approve the annual financial report. The motion carried.

The next exciting part of the meeting was a presentation of the checks for the \$50 grants. Each recipient gave a short summary of the intended use of funds for their projects. Recipients included:

Cameron Johnson, Myah Osegard, Bailey Hynek, Carter Simonson, Jay Stetzer, Sean Stetzer, Drew Stetzer, Abigail Bue, Kendall Bue, Brady Blaken, Parker Blaken, William Blaken, Jadrean Borreson, Reed

Borreson, Sami Carriere, Brett Massman, Adam Massman, Tanner Bue, Kyra Bue

Elections were the next component of the annual meeting. Nominations for the Promotion and Education Chair position were opened. Savannah Brown was nominated. There was a motion by Steve Boe and the motion was seconded by Luke Trapp to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Savannah Brown. The motion carried. The nominations for the Young Farmer and Agriculturists Chair position were opened. Luke Trapp was nominated. There was a motion by Steve Boe which was seconded by Steve Kling to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Luke Trapp. The motion carried. Nathan Kling and Taylor Koss were nominated during the selection of members of the board of directors. There was a motion by Steve Boe which was seconded by Leonard Olson to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for those nominated. The motion carried. Nominations were opened for delegates to the WFBF Annual Meeting. Ryan Sawyer and Ryan Quarne were nominated. There was a motion by Leonard Olson which was seconded by Steven Kling to close nominations. The motion carried. Nate Kling, Ryan Sawyer and Ryan Quarne will serve as delegates.

The resolutions from the District 4 Policy Meeting were next on the agenda and were presented to attendees. Twenty-two resolutions were presented and one was added. A resolution was added to strike from the WFBF Policy Book the resolution on page 5 line 3 and 4. There was a motion made by Luke Trapp which was seconded by Steve Boe to approve the proposed resolutions. The motion carried.

The final activity was giving out the door prizes which included over 210 pounds of frozen pork from the animal that was purchased from a Jackson County exhibitor that did not qualify for the livestock auction. The motion for adjournment was made by Luke Trapp and seconded by Steve Boe to adjourn. The motion carried.



Jescey Tompson and Jazmin Wagner presenting at Jackson County annual meeting.



President Nathan Kling handing out grant checks at annual meeting.



A grant recipient presenting what the grant money will be invested in.

NEW LOGIN PROCESS

Member Information and Benefits

We are excited to share that we now have a member interactive database. At the top of wfbf.com, you'll see three buttons: Login, Join, Renew. To create your account and access your member information, you will want to click the login button.



SCAN THE QR CODES BELOW



User Login



Member Benefits

Andersons Recognized at 2024 Jackson County Outstanding Farm Family Dinner

The 2024 Jackson County Outstanding Farm Family Recognition Dinner was held July 31 at the Jackson County Fair with over 70 people in attendance. This year's family was the Andrew and Elvera Anderson family. Andy and Elvera married March 21, 1956, and have a long history in farming. They started farming in the Hixton township until Andy got called to serve in the army reserves. Elvera and family stayed in Black River Falls while Andy served in the military. In 1971, they purchased their current farm on Cloverdale Road. They dairy farmed with Holstein cows while raising five children. Their children are Andrew Jr., Gloria, Barb, Paul and Dawn. Andy and Elvera are currently proud grandparents and great-grandparents.

The couple farmed many years until they sold the cows after the children had grown. The cows were missed so they got back into dairy farming after a short break. They continued dairy farming along with Elvera working at Walmart. The second time selling the cows ended the dairy, but they raised beef cattle for a while afterward. Andy transported many Amish to activities while beef farming. Their grandson continues to raise crops on the family farm.

The Andersons have both been involved as community leaders. Each has been active in the Little Norway Church. Andy was in the men's club, and he also served on the church board. Elvera was a Sunday school teacher and was involved in ladies' aide and the women's club.

Andy and Elvera served as 4-H leaders for the Cloverettes 4-H Club. Some of the activities they were involved with included assisting with the members' fair projects, working in the food stand and helping at the fair. Andy loved watching the draft horse show at the Jackson County Fair. Elvera was a lifelong member of Extension Homemakers of Jackson County. She did many activities at the local and county level.

Farm Bureau played an important part in their life as well. They had ponies and a cart that they would pull in parades that the Jackson County Farm Bureau Queen would ride on. Andy was the Farm Bureau Fruit Chair for many years. He would organize the sale and coordinate the pickup of fruit at the Farm Bureau office along with a hard-working crew. Jackson County Farm Bureau has served the luncheon at the Jackson County livestock auction for many years and the workforce serving always included Andy and Elvera. Elvera was the Jackson County Women's Chair and served as a director on the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Women's Committee. The Andersons attended WFBF Annual Meetings throughout the state and were official delegates at those meetings for a number of years, serving as a voice for farmers at the convention.

FFA was a very important organization for the Andersons. They hosted farm tours for the FFA, specifically through the Food for America program. A normal year would see fourth graders coming out to the farm to witness the cows and machinery. The students would meet with FFA members to discuss agriculture and how it related to the fun they had on the farm.

In 1997, the Anderson family hosted the Jackson County Dairy Breakfast, and it was well attended. Both Andersons served on the Jackson County Dairy Promotion Committee for long terms. Elvera served as the coffee supervisor for many years which included storing all the coffee pots in her basement for years.

The Nominating Committee believes that Andersons are very deserving of this award for their many years of service to the community and Jackson County's agriculture community. They have been a terrific role model of a family farm working through farming struggles and maintaining a positive attitude for their family, community and country.



Andrew and Elvera Anderson.



Leonard Olson presenting Outstanding Family Plaque to Andy and Elvera Anderson.



Andy and Elvera with immediate family.



The whole crew that showed up for Mom and Dad, Grandma and Grandpa!

Jackson County Sponsors Young Farmer Golf Outing

On August 16 with abundantly good weather and tremendous camaraderie, the Jackson County Young Farmer and Agriculturists hosted golfers from Jackson and neighboring counties with a fun-filled evening of

golf. Luke Trapp reported over 20 golfers attended and thankfully, all 19 golf carts were returned.



Jackson County Young Farmers and Agriculturists hosted a large group for golf at Skyline in Black River Falls.



Golf is especially fun when you have a DD for your golf cart.



Big swings were evident along with a good time in great weather!

Monroe County Farm Bureau Holds Annual Meeting

The Monroe County Farm Bureau annual meeting started with the introduction of guests. WFBF District 4 Director Joe Bragger, RMIC District Manager Randy Palmer, Sen. Brad Pfaff, Rep. Jill Billings, Assembly Candidate Cedric Schnitzler, Senate candidate Stacy Klein and District 4 WFBF Coordinator Kevin Whalen.

Monroe County Farm Bureau president J. Wells emceed the meeting and brought the speakers forward in a polite and efficient manner. First up was RMIC District Manager Randy Palmer. He manages the Hidden Valley district which has been one of the top performing districts. He explained that it was the good agents he has working for him that makes his district function so well. District 4 Coordinator Kevin Whalen continued the presentations, highlighting the outstanding efforts that the county has been putting forth in activities. District 4 Director Joe Bragger gave an update on the happenings of the WFBF Board of Directors.

The next part of the agenda was the highlight of the meeting. Nine youngsters with fair projects received their \$50 grants and explained to the assembly what they were going to use the money for with their programs. Grant recipients were Isaac Wells, Nathan Wells, Audrey Wells, Brady Wells, Cole Wells, Spencer Trescher, Logan Trescher, Jayce Blank and Audra Blank.

The next important part of the meeting included candidate stump speeches advocating their election. Senate candidate Stacey Klein started with her background and vision for the district. Assemblywoman Jill Billings spoke about her past accomplishments and explained her background. Cedric Schnitzler spoke on his past accomplishments on the county board level and how it could make him a good assemblyman.

Next on the docket was the business meeting. Last year's minutes were up for review. There was a motion by James Herricks which was seconded by Richard Terpstra to approve minutes of the 2023 annual meeting. The motion carried. Finance was next on the agenda. There was a motion by Derek

Trescher which was seconded by James Herricks to approve the financial report. The motion carried.

Elections commenced with the selection of the WFBF Annual Meeting delegates. A motion was made and seconded to open nominations. Dawn Powell, Derek Trescher, James Herricks, Kori Blank and J. Wells were nominated as delegates and Emily Powell Richard Terpstra and Al Ferris were nominated as alternates. There was a motion by Derek Trescher which was seconded by Chris Blank to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for those nominated. The motion carried. The reelection of an expiring board member was short. A motion was made and seconded to open nominations. J. Wells was nominated. A motion was made by Derek Trescher and was seconded by Chris Blank to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for J. Wells. The motion carried.

The election of committee chairs was the next item on the agenda. A motion was made and seconded to open nominations for Young Farmer and Agriculturist Chair. Emily Powell was nominated. There was a motion by Derek Trescher which was seconded by Chris Blank to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Emily Powell. The motion carried. The Promotion and Education Chair was to be selected next. A motion was made and seconded to open nominations. Emily Powell was nominated. There was a motion by Derek Trescher which was seconded by Chris Blank to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Emily Powell. The motion carried. In preparation for the WFBF Annual Meeting, 24 resolutions were presented. A motion was made by Harvey Mann and seconded by Richard Terpstra to approve all resolutions presented and one from the floor. After debate, all were approved. Resolutions cannot be printed until the state delegates approve them. Following discussion, President J. Wells adjourned the meeting.



Grant recipients did a great job explaining their projects.



President Wells served as emcee for the meeting.



The youngest grant recipient received an assistance from dad so we could see him up front.

Farm Bureau Participates in Career Fair

Over 200 Cashton school students visited the Farm Bureau booth at the Cashton Career Fair on October 16 at the Cashton High School. The career fair, which was held for its second time, gave students a chance to speak with local leaders in many potential career positions. The activity lasted from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with students visiting as part of their school day schedule. Students ranged from eighth graders to seniors with questions custom-made for each age group.

Kori Blank, who serves as Monroe County Farm Bureau's Promotion and Education Chair, served as the leader of the activity. She worked with FFA officers to set up the gym and the FFA members supplied lunch for the workers at the booths. Over 20 tables with local employees assisted the students in learning about their careers. The Farm Bureau booth sponsored a Career Jenga activity that allowed self-evaluation and career decision-making. Monroe County Farm Bureau sponsored materials for the event.



Sophomores trying the challenge of Career Jenga at the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Booth.



Careers were investigated by students ranging from 8th grade to seniors.

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.
- 2) Must be going to school for agriculture, it may be either to Farm and Industry Short Course, a technical school or college.
- 3) Must have the application in by March 15, 2025.
- 4) Must be a graduating high school senior.

There will be two \$500 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.



Coloring Contest

Open to children of Farm Bureau families in Monroe County.

Mail to:

Peggy Wright

605 W. Wisconsin Street

Sparta, WI 54656

Contest deadline: January 15, 2025

Name:

Age:

Address:

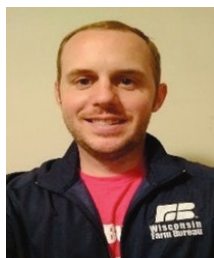
Phone:



Trempealeau County

wfbf.com/about/counties/trempealeau
TrempealeauCountyFarmBureau

President's Message



Derek Husmoen

Trempealeau County Farm Bureau President 2022-2024

Our county board of directors has grown this year by a few members. I want to thank Lindsay Kurth, Andrea Rippley-Schlais and Becky Bisek for joining the board, as well as the rest of the board members for all their time and efforts in continuing to help grow and guide the

Trempealeau County Farm Bureau.

Late last year, several of us attended the WFBF Annual Meeting in Wisconsin Dells. While we all enjoyed mingling with other friends and Farm Bureau members from across the state, the most important aspect was serving as delegates at the Policy Development Meeting. The policy development process is at the core of our grassroots organization. The policy set forth at the meeting was a result of county Farm Bureau voices and opinions being brought to the table; bringing up issues and taking action on topics important to all of us. I'm proud of the active role our county and the rest of District 4 has in this grassroots policy process.

On a more local level, we continue to place an emphasis on agriculture and youth in Trempealeau County. We are hoping to continue to grow our Agriculture in the Classroom program. We selected and awarded a scholarship recipient this year, and again sponsored showmanship winners and animal grants at the fair. Speaking of the Trempealeau County Fair, it was once again a success in 2024. The milkshakes continue to be a hot commodity. A majority of the money received from shake sales goes to supporting our county youth and their endeavors in agriculture. Having a

trailer to sell milkshakes sure has opened the door for new opportunities. We served milkshakes this fall at the Trempealeau County Dairy Breakfast as well as at the Riverland Energy Cooperative Member Appreciation Day in early October.

Over the past year, we have been looking at investment options for some extra cash in our accounts. With the higher interest rates being offered lately, we thought this might be a good option. After much research, we decided on a Farm Bureau Fixed Annuity that guarantees 3.9% interest for six years with a minimum investment of \$25,000. This type of investment has no market risk and we as a board decided this was the best route to go. The annuity was written through Farm Bureau Financial Services in Iowa, which is the same company that Rural Mutual agents write life insurance and annuities for Rural Mutual clients. The goal with this was to help set up the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau for success in the future. We'd like to thank Randy Palmer and Tricia Cichosz of Rural Mutual for their guidance, support and help in getting this annuity set up.

I want to thank all Farm Bureau members for their participation in the past year's activities. It's your efforts that make our county events a success. Looking ahead, we want to find ways the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau can be more involved in our communities. Feel free to reach out to me and the rest of the board with any ideas you may have. Whether it's new ways to promote agriculture in the county or a new event we can bring our shake trailer to...we'd love to hear your thoughts.

Trempealeau County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting

Many members and guests attended the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau meeting on August 15. The meeting was held in Blair at the Schroeder Shelter in Memorial Park. Many guests were present including Randy Palmer, Rural Insurance District Manager for Trempealeau County; Analiese Wegner, agriculture advocate and online personality with FarmHer; Terry Schoonover, 29th District Assembly Candidate; Rob Stafsholt, 10th District State Senator, John Sacia, Trempealeau County District Attorney; Joe Bragger, District Four Director; and Kevin Whalen, District 4 Coordinator. The first activity of the night was a fine meal with pulled turkey and fixings from Falls Meats. After the meal and delicious dessert, president Derek Husmoen led the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance. Next on the agenda was our evening highlight. Our guest speaker, Analiese Wegner from the Ettrick area, presented on her agriculture advocacy work she does with "FarmHer." Ms. Wegner, a former Trempealeau County Farm Bureau board director, explained how she teaches agriculture literacy with her online public media program.

The parade of candidates started with District Attorney John Sacia speaking on priorities on the county level. Rob Stafsholt introduced himself and explained his qualifications for continuing to serve as State Senator. Terry Schoonover gave his pitch on becoming an assemblyman.

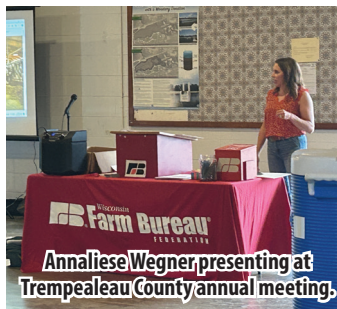
The business began with a motion by Shane Goplin which was seconded by Kendra Goplin to approve the 2023 annual meeting minutes. The financial report was moved by Todd Quarne and was seconded by Andrea Schlais. The report was approved by the assembly. Randy Palmer, District Manager for the Hidden Valleys region of Rural Mutual Insurance, which now includes all of Trempealeau County, reported on the status of sales and gave recommendations on what should be insured. District 4 Promotion and Education Chair Brenda Dowiasch reported on the large number of P&E activities. District 4 Coordinator Kevin Whalen introduced the new membership portal. District 4 Director Joe Bragger presented on the state of the district. Four livestock exhibitors presented what they would do with their

\$50 grants. Young Farmer and Agriculturists Chair Katie Engevold spoke on upcoming activities including YFA Conference and WFBF Annual Meeting.

The evening continued with elections. WFBF Annual Meeting delegates were first on the agenda. There was a motion by Andrea Schlais which was seconded by Emily Oates to open nominations for WFBF Annual Meeting delegates. The motion carried. Kyle Nilsestuen, Becky Bisek, Shane Goplin, Andrea Schlais were nominated. The alternates selected were Jeremiah Walek and Nick Gamroth.



Derek Husmoen assisting a young exhibitor at the annual meeting.



Analiese Wegner presenting at Trempealeau County annual meeting.

Election of county chairs followed starting with Young Farmer and Agriculturists Chair position. There was a motion by Kyle Nilsestuen which was seconded by Emily Oates to open nominations for YFA Chair. The motion carried. Katie Engevold was nominated. There was a motion by Shane Goplin which was seconded by Kendra Goplin to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Katie Engevold. Next the Promotion and Education

Chair was selected. Andrea Schlais was nominated. The nominations were closed and there was a unanimous voice vote.

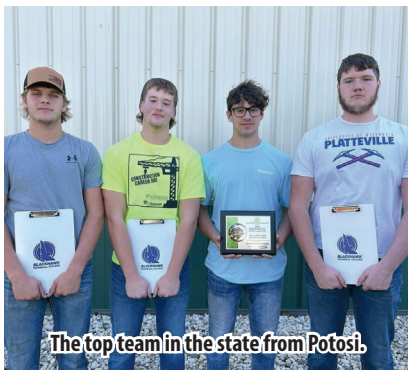
The selection of board directors was the last election to be conducted at the annual meeting. There was a motion to open nominations by Shane Goplin. This was seconded by Kendra Goplin. There was a motion by Andrea Schlais to suspend the rule on term limitations. This was seconded by Nick Gamroth. The motion passed unanimously. Derek Husmoen and Kyle Nilsestuen were nominated. There was a motion by Katie Engevold which 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. Kendra Goplin proposed two new internal resolutions. There was a motion by Shane Goplin which was seconded by Nick Gamroth to approve all 22 proposed resolutions. The motion carried. All resolutions were sent to the Policy Development Committee.

Wisconsin Holds State Land Conservation Judging

Over 200 students from 30 Wisconsin high schools competed in the Wisconsin FFA State Soil and Land Evaluation Competition on October 9 at Blackhawk Technical College's Monroe Campus in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. Land judging contests promote the importance of soil health and education, partnerships and teamwork.

The students traveled to Roger and Cheri Johnson's farm, which is located west of Juda. 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 Potosi, with Fennimore coming in second and third went to Monticello. Fourth place went to Milton and fifth went to Black Hawk. In the senior division, the top three teams were Potosi in first, Monticello in second, and Cassville in third.



The top team in the state from Potosi.



The judges in action.

American FFA Degree Recipients

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

Connor Weltzien - Arcadia

Jacob Carter Thompson - Galesville-Ettrick-Trempealeau

Ian George - Mondovi

Kayden Miller - Mondovi

Olivia Taylor - Mondovi

Jaydon Darin Lietzau - Sparta

Kaden Dohlmán - Tomah

Erin Kathleen Perry - Tomah

Gabriel Douglas Tucker - Tomah

Cally Von Haden - Tomah



Two American FFA Degree recipients from Tomah with their FFA Advisors.

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