Advocating the Voice of Agriculture through Education and Grassroots Legislation

Phone: (217) 753-5200 • www.sangamonfb.org • farmbureau@sangamonfb.org
Springfield, IL • Volume MMXV Number 6
November
2nd: Governmental Affairs Committee Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
5th: Women’s Committee Fall Luncheon, 9:30 a.m.
9th: Young Leader Committee Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
16th: Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
26th-27th: Office Closed - Happy Thanksgiving!

December
5th-8th: IAA Annual Meeting, Palmer House Hilton, Chicago
10th: Women’s Committee Christmas Luncheon, 11:00 a.m.
14th: Young Leader Committee Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
21st: Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
24th-25th: Office Closed - Merry Christmas!
31st-Jan. 1st: Office Closed - Happy New Year!

All events take place at the Sangamon County Farm Bureau unless otherwise noted.
time to start thinking about Sangamon County Farm Bureau business again. We have our October Executive Committee meeting conference call this Tuesday morning and the Board meeting follows on Monday. I want to take a moment and thank the Executive Board: Ben Ladage, Vice President; David Ray, Treasurer; Phil Sidles, Secretary; and Jason Pickrell, Assistant Secretary for taking time to serve as officers. I often look to them for their advice and opinions! Thanks for all you do for Sangamon County Farm Bureau guys - it is much appreciated. I would also like to thank our staff, Arika Mason, Finance/Membership Admin. Assistant; what a great job she does for us and for me as President. When I call and ask her to do something I worry no longer, for I know it will be done and it will be done right. Jenny Webb, Assistant Manager; she has indeed been a blessing to SCFB. It seems as though she has always been a part of our staff, she hit the ground running and has never looked back. She has a determination to get the job done and done right and she does it with a smile and great attitude. Jim Birge, Manager; I am thankful to Jim, for he has surrounded himself with a great staff, and throughout harvest he did not bother me unless it was absolutely necessary. I really appreciate it. Thank you Arika, Jenny and Jim!

As most of you know by now, Phillip Nelson, Illinois Director of Ag, stepped down from the position earlier this fall. What a great loss that was for Illinois agriculture and Illinois farmers. I wonder in the back of my mind - is this the same old Illinois politics? I have heard the statement made several times, “Well Phil Nelson just did not understand how to play politics in Illinois, what a sad state of affairs.” I would think it is time for the State of Illinois to quit playing the same old politics of the past. I know one thing for certain, we lost a champion for agriculture, not only in Illinois, but for this great country.

Remember, IAA Annual Meeting will be coming up in early December in Chicago. I hope to see you there. As members of SCFB if you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to call me or the office. I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming meetings and events.

I hope you all had a safe and bountiful harvest. May God bless each and every one!

**Commentary from Sangamon County Circuit Clerk Paul Palazzolo**

Make no mistake about it – Sangamon County continues to be the level of government that serves with efficiency, effectiveness and fiscal responsibility! As part of that success, the Sangamon County Circuit Clerk’s office is the administrative arm of the county’s court system.

Think about it -- at some point, the Sangamon County Circuit Clerk’s office has had contact with you and/or your family. Whether it’s as simple as a traffic ticket or as complicated as a court case, the office carries out and documents the legal aspects of our lives. Specifically, we keep the official records of the court; we collect and disburse money owed to the court and we provide additional benefits to the public like informational seminars and passport services.

When it comes to keeping the official record of the court, your Circuit’s Clerk’s office is well organized. We open, manage and conclude over 55,000 court cases per year. We also provide the staffing for courtroom proceedings, digitally scan millions of documents, accurately maintain electronic and paper case files and report case results to all the relevant agencies. We have skillfully used advances in technology to increase the efficiency and convenience of dealing with our office while, at the same time, decreasing the time and money it takes to run it.

Nearly $600,000 every month. That’s the amount collected and disbursed by your Circuit Clerk’s office resulting from court action. Consequently, we are a revenue generator, and when we do our jobs well, we ensure that much of the system is paid for by those who use it. Another positive feature of our service is collecting and disbursing child support and restitution payments. A high level of trust is placed in the Circuit Clerk’s office, and we take that responsibility very seriously.

Beyond the courts, your Circuit Clerk’s office reaches out to inform the public on a series of special issues related to the legal arena. We often host seminars on topics such as wills, expungement and the landlord/tenant relationship. One of our most popular features is our passport service. Please consider using our office for your family’s passport needs – sometimes it’s a good idea to get it done even without planned travel. For information, please call us at 753-6674.

It’s not as glamorous as an episode of *Law and Order* or *Perry Mason*, but, on a daily basis, the Sangamon County Circuit Clerk’s office works hard to fulfill one of the guarantees of our United States Constitution. Most importantly, our team serves proudly in Sangamon County government, the level of government that has worked responsibly for the taxpayer.
The Bureau According to Jim

Jim Birge

As fall melds into winter and people tend to stay indoors for longer periods, I too spend more time indoors at the Farm Bureau office. With the Illinois Farm Bureau meeting details being taken care of, preparing for winter meetings and events, following up on requests for information from our awesome members, and generally keeping the organization in good financial order, there’s plenty to stay inside for. But, when an opportunity arises, I enjoy continually learning about Farm Bureau and agriculture history by looking through our archive of Sangamo Farmer issues dating back to 1919. It is in these publications that I get a real sense of what Farm Bureau and agriculture history has done and has become to its members.

While I’m on the subject of names in our history, I’d like to take a just a moment to show my respect by naming and acknowledging the people of the very first board of directors. These names will undoubtedly be recognizable family names to those in your community today. I’m sure you know the children, grandchildren, or even great grandchildren of these members. The Executive Council was comprised of M.W. Summers (President), W.L. Beatty (Vice-President), Harry Pickrell (Secretary), John P. Stout (Treasurer), John W. Vorhes, F.F. Ide, J. Garrett Tolan, George P. Ferry, and George Washburn. The Agricultural Council (similar to our board of directors today) was comprised of E.H. Burtle (Auburn), Charles W. Matthew (Ball), Charles M Raynolds (Buffalo Hart), Charles F. Council (Capital), M.M. Campbell (Cartwright), George Pereboom (Chatham), O.B. Wheeland (Clear Lake), John W. Ross (Cooper), N.A. Smith (Cotton Hill), Felix McQuitty (Curran), George Brown (Divernon), A.E. Petefish (Fancy Creek), Harry Happer (Gardner), Charles D. Correll (Illiopolis), Leigh Maxcy (Island Grove), James Herrin (Lanesville), Arther Washburn (Loami), George W. Dunseth (Maxwell), Lewis Bird (Mechanicsburg), F.M. Taylor (New Berlin), W. Hamilton (Pawnee), J.D. Hunter (Rochester), A.F. Rhodes (Salisbury), Reed Perkins (Springfield), W.B. Curtiss (Talkington), James E. Caldwell (Williams), and J.A. Leland (Woodside). These courageous men stepped up to form a voice for all of agriculture and ask their fellow farmers to put their hard earned money into this new organization. Without them and many like them, I wouldn’t even be writing this column to all you wonderful people.

The readings of the first Sangamo Farmer highlights the call for farmers to organize. These reasons remain fundamentally unchanged today. Page 4 of the January 1919 issue of the Sangamo Farmers states, “Every Farmer in Sangamon County should become a member of the Sangamon County Farm Bureau. Sixty Four of the one hundred two counties now have Farm Bureaus. These Farm Bureaus are members of the Illinois Agricultural Association, which is a farmers organization free from the control of any political or commercial interests. There are one-fifth as many members of labor unions in the United States as there are farmers. Labor unions make their influence felt in every department of the State and Federal Governments. Farmers properly organized could demand and receive a square deal in both state and national affairs.”

These are powerful statements that we as members of this great organization have come to understand. Even though the fight is often an uphill battle, we’re better off from having engaged government and won numerous battles than to have not organized and lost them all.

As the recent late and great Yogi Berra so cleverly stated, “It’s like deja vue all over again.” Well said Yogi! RIP.

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Call the Sangamon County Farm Bureau if you would like more information @ 217-753-5200

Watch future issues of the Sangamo Farmer for an entry form and further details.

Do you live in a pre-civil war farmhouse?

The Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission and the Sangamon County Farm Bureau will host a program with the intent of locating and determining all pre-civil war farmhouses in the county located on operative farms, including the oldest extant home on an operative farm. The organizations will jointly solicit applications from owners of homes believed to have been built prior to 1860.

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I hope this finds everyone finished up with harvest and happy with the yields. The Women’s Committee passed out snacks to farmers in the field and at the elevator in various areas across the county at the beginning of October. Our Fall Luncheon will be November 5th. We will have a guest speaker teaching us about the uses and benefits of essential oils. In December we are going to prepare a meal at the Ronald McDonald house and enjoy a nice Christmas lunch as a committee. I hope everyone has a blessed fall and Christmas season.

On September 11, Katie King gave a presentation to the Williamsville High School’s Drivers Education classes on sharing the roads with farm equipment. Thanks to Katie for doing a great job. Also, thanks to Ethan Krone for providing the equipment for the demonstration.

The Young Leaders will be sending several of its members to Chicago Dec. 5-8 for the Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. I will be representing Sangamon County and District 10 in the State Young Leader Discussion Meet on Saturday December 5th. I am looking forward to the competition and will do my best to make Sangamon County proud.

The committee is in the process of planning several activities during the winter months including a CPR class, group dinner, volunteering at the Central Illinois Foodbank and a fun team building activity in Springfield.

The next Young Leader meeting will be on November 9th at 7pm at the SCFB office. For more information about the Young Leader Committee events, contact Jenny at the SCFB office.

As I write my article for this edition of the Sangamo Farmer, harvest has been completed on The Beaty Farm and within a couple of days all field work will have also been completed. What great harvest weather we were blessed with this year! Here on our farm we have not had a day off since we started. As I reflect back on this year’s harvest and the harvests of years past, I can’t imagine being a farm wife and not being involved in the day to day operations of the harvest. My husband constantly reminds me that our operation would not function without my involvement and I have to admit that is definitely true. It is great to work together as a partnership. That is why this month with the current slow activity of the committee after our busy summer and getting ready to gear up for next year’s activities, I thought I would dedicate my article to Farm Women. After all, November is ‘National Farm Women’s’ month.

Every year in November our Women’s Committee presents a Farm Woman of the Year award to a deserving lady. I was blessed to receive that award in 2000 and there have been many others over the years that have rightfully received the award.

I recently read an article on the internet about National Farm Women’s month. It talked about a survey done with farmers on the success of their farm. The results showed that 68% attributed success of their farm to their spouse or marriage as the key factor. The second most frequent response was the ability to handle adversity, which was also attributed to the spouse. Today’s farm woman plays key roles in the operation, from farm management, marketing expertise, communication with consumers, handling business records, and keeping track of herd, to crop figures and day to day operation of the farm. We as farm women have many hats to wear. I say to all my Farm Woman readers, ‘Happy Farm Women’s Month!’ You so deserve a month dedicated to YOU! I’m sure you all feel the same as I that this farm life is a great life and I love what I do! To all you farmer husbands: I encourage you to nominate your wife for the Farm Woman of the Year award. Every year they are looking for deserving women. This would be just one way of you showing your wife how much you appreciate her involvement in the farming operation. Farmers, if your wife isn’t involved, urge her to get involved and help her to understand the day to day operations. You never know when she may be running the operation!

Mark your calendars now for our first Trivia Night Fundraiser for the Sangamon County Farm Bureau Foundation to be held on March 12, 2016 at the Eagles Lodge #437 on Ash in Springfield. This promises to be a fun night for all you trivia people out there! $100 for a table with up to 10 people per table. More info will be coming soon. Call the office @ 753-5200 to sign up!

In closing, I would like to wish everyone a safe and blessed Holiday Season. I hope you get to spend time with family and friends and reflect back on all you have been blessed with this year! Happy Holidays from The Beaty Farm!
The Sangamo Farmer
Sangamon County Farm Bureau

Committee Reports

MARKETING

Rich Ramsey
My tenure on the Farm Bureau Board is over but I’m excited to see others have the opportunity to step up and be the next generation of the board. That includes the chairmanship of the Marketing Committee. While committee chairs don’t have to be one of the elected members of the board, they do sit on the board in a non-voting capacity and report the activities of their committee. In the case of the Marketing Committee, I’m proud to now share the responsibilities with our new co-chair Matt Heissinger. Matt will do a great job representing the committee at board meetings and between he, I, and the rest of the members of the committee, we can hopefully continue to improve on the successes we’ve accomplished.

One wintertime event we are planning is an iPad/tablet training series for farmers. We’re planning to hold the training on three separate days. Day 1 will be for members who need the VERY basics of tablets. Day 2 and 3 will be designed for current tablet users who want to learn more about the plethora of agricultural apps that can be incorporated into their farming operation to assist in nearly any aspect imaginable.

Stay tuned to the next issue of the Sangamo Farmer, our website (sangamofb.org), and direct mail pieces for all the details and registration information.

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Allen Entwistle
Not breaking news, but as I write this we still have a budget impasse in Springfield. To add to the disappointment in state government we recently saw the resignation of Philip Nelson as our Director of Agriculture. We’ve lost perhaps one of the best Ag Governmental Affairs Directors we’ve seen in many years.

Why? Philip has a long history of doing the right thing, the right way. In a government environment that’s so entrenched in backroom deals and unethical practices, some of the innermost workings of government (not necessarily the ones we elect) aren’t willing to relinquish power in order to do the real work of the people. That’s why corruption and utter failure of the State of Illinois makes our state the laughing stock of the nation that’s nearly insolvent and impotent.

If there is much in the way of good news, believe it or not, it’s at the federal level. In a positive step, the U.S. Court of Appeals issued a TEMPORARY stay of the WOTUS rule NATIONWIDE. The new WOTUS rule cannot be enforced by the Corps or USEPA during that time. Although it is temporary, it sends a strong signal that this rule is unlawful and unjustly burdensome on states and the public.

Our committee will continue to follow these and other issues important to our members’ interests. As always, please be ready to make your calls to elected officials and government agencies when an action request is made. We are only strong because of your voice and the voices of all our members.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Paul Rice
Engaging our members and urging them to provide feedback on Farm Bureau policy is one of the core values of the organization. It’s what truly makes us a grassroots organization and something that other organizations would give their left arm for.

During this time of year, the ideas and input from members all across the state are discussed and refined for debate by approximately 450 County Farm Bureau delegates in December at the Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. Some of these many ideas will be voted into becoming the policy of IFB and the County Farm Bureaus over the next year. Others will be voted down and may have to be refined for another attempt next year. This is a true democratic process that puts the steering wheel of the Farm Bureau ship squarely in the hands of its very own members.

If you have an idea that we need to consider for future policy please let us know about it. We take genuine ideas very seriously and will seek to research the idea for policy debate.

We’re getting ready to start discussing policy proposals for this year’s annual meeting. The results of those discussions will be reported back to you after the IFB Annual Meeting in early December.
Nutrient Stewardship Grants Offered

The Illinois Farm Bureau Board of Directors voted in July to commit $100,000 to a Nutrient Stewardship Grant Program for county Farm Bureaus to work on local soil health, water quality, or nutrient-related projects. This program will allow county Farm Bureaus to play an even larger role in the nutrient stewardship efforts in their local areas.

Funds will be awarded for projects that foster collaboration with partners on the ground, such as local watershed groups, other county Farm Bureaus, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, conservation groups, ag retailers, and others. Project examples could include water quality monitoring activities, equipment purchases, involvement in local watershed group projects, field demonstration days, and education materials. However, this is not an exhaustive list. Each county Farm Bureau can assess what is needed in their local area to move the needle in terms of nutrient stewardship, water quality, and soil health issues.

The deadline for county Farm Bureaus to apply for grant funding is December 31, 2015. Contact Sangamon County Farm Bureau soon with project ideas.

“A Sign of Your Legacy”

Hang a gate sign of your own. While your sign announces your agriculture legacy, you will also help teach children the importance of farming. You see, a portion of the gate sign fee goes to support the Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom program.

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