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# THE SANGAMO *Farmer*

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2019



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Springfield, IL • Volume MMXIX Number 4

# Upcoming Meetings & Events

## SEPTEMBER

2nd.....Labor Day, Office Closed  
 9th.....Governmental Affairs Committee (Tentative), 6:00 p.m.  
 9th.....Young Leader Committee Meeting, 7:00 p.m.  
 16th.....Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.  
 19th.....Women's Committee Meeting, 5:30 p.m.

## OCTOBER

7th.....Governmental Affairs Committee (Tentative), 6:00 p.m.  
 14th.....Young Leader Committee Meeting, 7:00 p.m.  
 17th.....Women's Committee Meeting, 6:00 p.m.  
 21st.....Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.  
 31st.....Halloween

DIRECTOR ATTENDANCE - 2019		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O
<b>District 1</b>	Brent Johnson	X	X	-	X	-	-	X			
	Michael Kinner (Treasurer)	X	X	X	X	-	X	X			
	Anna Stone	X	X	X	-	-	X	X			
	Jason Pickrell	-	-	X	X	-	X	-			
<b>District 2</b>	Otto Rentschler	-	X	-	-	-	-	X			
	Kevin Foran	X	X	X	X	-	X	X			
	Dale Edwards	-	X	X	X	-	-	-			
	Ethan Krone	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-			
<b>District 3</b>	Ben Ladage	X	X	X	X	-	X	X			
	Mike Borgic	X	X	-	X	-	X	X			
	Adam Bailey (Ass't Sec/Treas)	X	X	-	-	-	X	-			
	Cathryn Ayers (VP)	X	X	X	X	-	X	X			
<b>District 4</b>	Phil Sidles (President)	X	X	X	X	-	X	-			
	Diana Beaty (Secretary)	-	-	X	X	-	X	X			
	Matt Heissinger	X	X	X	X	-	X	X			
	Marty Fairchild	X	X	X	X	-	X	X			
<b>At-Large</b>	Pam Neuman	-	X	X	X	-	-	X			
	Gary Reavis	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	X			
	David Ray	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	X			
	<b>GAC Chair</b> , Allen Entwistle	-	X	-	-	-	X	X			
	<b>M&amp;PR Chair</b> , Janet Edwards	-	X	X	X	-	-	-			
	<b>YL Chair</b> , Stephen Prather	X	X	X	X	-	X	X			
	<b>Women's Chair</b> , Cassandra Bennett	-	X	X	-	-	X	-			
	<b>Policy D. Chair</b> , Jason Komnick	-	X	-	X	-	-	-			

THE SANGAMO FARMER	
Published bi-monthly by the <b>Sangamon County Farm Bureau</b> James Birge, Editor Periodical # 481320 <b>SANGAMON COUNTY FARM BUREAU</b> Office: 2631 Beechler Court Springfield, Illinois 62703 President: Phil Sidles Vice-President: Cathryn Ayers Seifert Secretary: Diana Beaty Treasurer: Michael Kinner Asst. Secretary/Treasurer: Adam Bailey Periodical Class Postage Paid at Springfield, Illinois	Postmaster: Send Address Changes To: The Sangamo Farmer 2631 Beechler Court Springfield, Illinois 62703 <b>DIRECTORY FARM BUREAU STAFF</b> Manager: James Birge, FBCM Outreach & Communication: Lauren Burris Finance/Membership: Arika Leka Farm Bureau Tel. 217-753-5200 E-mail farmbureau@sangamonfb.org Individual membership fee of the Sangamon County Farm Bureau includes payment of \$2 per year for a subscription to the Sangamo Farmer.



Phil Sidles

As I write this, it seems that the summer is winding down, and I couldn't even tell you when it started. We've had a jam-packed summer full of fantastic Farm Bureau activities. I would like it to thank everyone that came out to an event this spring or summer. They're designed just for you, and we hope you find benefit and enjoyment from them.

As the calendar moves on, so does the organization. Our annual policy resolutions process is in full swing as we gather and review proposals to add, change, or delete policy, per our membership's request. Once sifted through by the state resolutions committee, the full slate of policy proposals will be debated at the Illinois Farm Bureau annual meeting in December by approximately 400 delegates comprised of representatives from every county. This is one of the most significant opportunities we, as members, have to make our voice heard. That's why we can honestly state that we're an actual grassroots organization, driven by its members. So, if you have an idea or

thought for the organization to pursue, have a conversation with a director or staff because it's just that simple and it's how some of the best policies begin.

As the summer comes to an end and we move into the harvest season, I encourage all of us to take a little extra time this fall to be safe; we know we will face challenges ahead. It seems nothing in the 2019 crop year is going to come easy. I know everyone will be in a hurry with a long, drawn-out harvest approaching, but remember that going slower is often faster, especially if it avoids an accident or injury that halts everything. I wish everyone the best as we tackle the work that lies ahead.

## The Bureau According to Jim



Jim Birge

Without a doubt, this year has been crazy and stressful for farmers. The wish to just have a normal year has turned out to be very elusive. I'm not even sure how to define a normal year anymore.

I have seen something substantially different about this year, though. No, it's not the apparent abnormalities of the crops. It's something far

more concerning that stems from those abnormalities. It's the psychological state of our members. I've seen higher numbers of farmers who, if you know them, are showing signs of significant psychological distress. I'd follow up that with, why wouldn't they be.

Although I know the factors that are worrying most farmers, I can't wholly state that I understand what they're going through. The stress and difficulties are unique to each farmer and each situation. And we all know that farmers are often proud and private, meaning they don't share their worries, not even with their own family members. That fact is likely the reason we see significant emotional distress and in the worst cases, farmer suicide.

I recently completed a certification course as a mental health first responder. Some of the content was deeply personal to me, as I've seen friends, family members, and even myself

face issues of depression, suicide, or anxiety, and all that goes with it. In many of these situations, the people involved suffered in silence until most of them were able to receive help and successfully deal with their problems. Sadly, I had a best friend that did not get that help and in a state of hopelessness, took his own life.

My reason for providing you with a glimpse of my personal story is to help you understand that you are not alone, nor are you different from anyone else in that respect. This year has pushed farmers deeper and deeper into those psychological distresses. I worry about many of them and want to be a part of helping or getting them the help, they need. We cannot afford to lose another farmer, mother/father, son/daughter, husband/wife, community leader, church leader, or any other title that may be bestowed upon them.

If you're reading this and it kind of hits you in the gut because you know you're that farmer I'm referring to, come to talk to me in private, confidentially. I can help, and I can provide resources to get you additional help. If you just want to meet somewhere for a cup of coffee and a little conversation, I'm ready. And, if I'm not that person you want to talk to then, by all means, find someone you are comfortable with such as your pastor/minister. They are always there for you too.

Remember this, the troubles you face are not necessarily of your doing and therefore not always under your control. So, don't be ashamed, don't be frightened. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**



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## Committee Reports



Stephen Prather

Young Leaders have been busy this summer, similar to the way the crops have finally been busy growing. The Ag-Stravaganza event was held on the last Sunday and Monday of July. This event truly exemplifies what the Sangamon County Farm Bureau is about, by allowing us to be the voice of agriculture through educating our

locally elected officials, the general public, and summer day care kids. My daughter's favorite part was definitely sitting up in the tractor and combine! We had many families come through the event on Sunday and had over 350 kids attend on Monday. The kids had the opportunity to learn about many different aspects in agriculture; like soybeans, sheep, beef, swine, dairy, bees, gardening, and equipment. Kids were able to interact with sheep, pigs, and a cow; sit in the seat of a John Deere 9507 RX tractor, and even eat some ice cream. I truly believe these kids went home and passed along some of the knowledge they learned with their family.

Due to unforeseen conditions and circumstances this year, the annual Tractor Drive had to be canceled. A huge thank you to the participants who pre-registered and especially to those who donated back their entry fee for the Harvest for All campaign. We truly appreciate your understanding and hope you will still join us next year. Save the date for the 3rd annual Tractor Drive & Contest to be held on June 20, 2020, with a rain date of July 11th. We decided to do a Tractor contest on Facebook. Our participants submitted their favorite photo of their tractor and the Top 3 Winners were selected based on "likes" on our Facebook page. Be sure to check out the winners in the next issue of the Sangamo Farmer.

Our sweet corn will be ready for harvest soon. We hope to donate our harvest to a local food pantry to help families in the area. A huge thank you to Grigsby Family Farms for allowing us the use of land to plant an acre of sweet corn.

### YOUNG LEADERS



Janet Edwards

I'm sitting here at the 2019 Illinois State Fair in the Open Swine Barn thinking about and writing this article. It is funny how time goes by so quickly as we get older, it seems like not that long ago was last year's state fair. I know our spring was forever coming but once the warm weather hit we were all hustling to get our crops in and then we turned around and summer is almost gone.

Since the last issue of the Sangamo Farmer, Farm Bureau members have been busy trying to educate our community on agriculture. Sangamon County Farm Bureau sponsored the "HAYLOFT" at the Sangamon County Fair in June and then the last weekend of July we held Ag-Stravaganza at the Sugar Creek Methodist Church in Chatham. I would like to take this time to thank all of the Farm Bureau Members (committee members, board members, and Young Leaders) for their help with manning the stations at the event along with members from the Buffalo Tri-City FFA and Taylorville FFA. It is exciting to see the young people step up and volunteer to help educate other young people on agriculture. These teens and young adults are our future leaders and need to be encouraged to continue volunteering with our organization so it can continue to stay strong in years to come.

By the time you are reading this, the Farm Progress Show will be happening or over and school will have started. We know harvest will be a little later this year but please remember to be aware of machinery on the roads along with the school buses. Take time for breaks and when time allows, get involved with the Sangamon County Farm Bureau and volunteer for one of the committees or activities that are planned.

### MEMBER & PR

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Cassie Bennett

It always shocks me with how fast the summer flies by! I always think next year we will tackle summer to the fullest! There's always next year! The Women's Committee is gearing up for another great year after our summer break with meetings resuming September 19 @ 5:30 at the office. Mark

your calendars to come by and see what we have in store this year! And be sure to look for our ad in the Farmer for our Fall Luncheon on November 13th!

### WOMEN'S

# Committee Reports



Allen Entwistle

Since most of the damage imposed by the General Assembly is now being implemented, we are all seeing the beginnings of how much these new taxes are going to harm our already unstable farming operations. But the pain is just beginning if we don't take notice of even more

significant danger, the question on the November 2020 ballot to change the Illinois Constitution to allow any kind of state income tax. The focus on the issue so far has been the proposal to move from a flat tax to a progressive tax. While this is certainly concerning to people, the more sinister allowance a constitutional change would have would be to give the General Assembly the ability to, at any time of their choosing, the ability to change future tax rates on any income level. This will create an environment that allows politicians to pit one income level against another to justify raising all taxes over time. Early polling of Illinois citizens seems to indicate that there is a majority in support of the amendment. What that means for the rest of us and Farm Bureau, in particular, is that we must clearly educate the entire population of Illinois voters about the inherent dangers that lie ahead if a constitutional amendment on income tax policy were to be approved by the voters in 2020. Don't be shy. Talk to your family, friends, neighbors, community organizations, and anywhere else where you can get an audience. Make sure they know the truth before going to the voting booth.

## GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS



Jason Komnick

Our committee recently held our Tailgate Talk Cookout where members could learn about how Farm Bureau policy is created and how it is implemented. Our guest was Illinois Farm Bureau Vice President Brian Duncan. Brian provided an inciteful discussion on the use of our policy and the often difficult

decisions the Illinois Farm Bureau Board of Directors must make during the foggy process of lawmaking at the state and federal levels. "Creating law is like making sausage, it has lots of different ingredients, isn't pretty, and can be awfully messy", Brian told the audience.

If you have an idea that affects you, your farm, or rural life in general and think Farm Bureau needs to act on it, please call our office and let our manager know your idea. He can see if we have current policy on the matter and help determine if we need to add a new policy or perhaps just tweak one that we already have. Don't be shy. Your organization is operated and guided by the needs of its members. Have a safe fall.

## POLICY DEVELOPMENT



Matt Heissinger

Recently, the committee hosted our members on a bus trip to Dekalb County where they toured a family farm that produces their own whiskey, on-site, from the very crops they grow on their farm. It was an exciting story and a beautiful facility. After lunch, the group toured Tate & Lyle's Flavoring Facility where

they make product ingredients to make the foods we eat tastier, last longer, hold together better, and almost any other attribute a food manufacturer might desire. For some members, the trip up and back was nearly as much of an interest as the tours themselves. They saw crop conditions quickly deteriorate as they traveled north. Once in the area of our tours, there were thousands of acres left fallow from prevented planting. It was sad to see and really made our members feel blessed to have the crops we have, even if they're long from perfect.

We also just hosted our fall Market Outlook Steakfry featuring market analyst Brian Burke from John Stewart & Associates. Brian provided a reaction to the fall crop report and implications for market reaction as we look ahead through harvest and into the winter. This was a must-attend meeting that really put some valuable information into members hands at a time of considerable uncertainty for farmers.

As we begin to think about harvest, please be sure those thoughts take into account your safety and the safety of those around you. Things will be stressful, and distractions can cause tragedy. So please take care.

## MARKETING



Governmental Affairs Committee had an iPad drawing for those participating in the Action Requests. Pictured is this years winner, Chad Kuhlmann, and Jim Birge, SCFB Manager. Be sure to participate in future Action Requests to be entered into the next drawing.

# Ag • Stravaganza



This years event was a great success with over 10 stations covering various sectors in the Agriculture industry. We were pleased to have some of our local elected officials and in attendance on Sunday evening and almost 350 daycare kids on Monday! Thank you to our volunteers and speakers for making this event possible. Be sure to mark your calendars for next years event, July 26th!





# 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing

Friday, July 12, 2019

The Sangamon County Farm Bureau Young Leader's Golf Team took home 1st Place at this years Golf Outing out of the 14 teams present. Be sure to mark your calendars for next years outing, July 10th! Pictured right is the Young Leader team, members Joe Olson, Gary Reavis, Jay Seigrist, and Charles Mayfield.



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## MYTH:

Stress is not a normal reaction to situations and it is better to deal with it on your own than reach out for help.

## FACT:

Stress is **normal**, especially for farmers who deal with unpredictable weather and markets. Find healthy ways to manage your stress - **mental health is just as vital as your physical safety!**

Calling upon the farming community - friends, neighbors, or clergy - makes a difference in managing stressful situations and crises.



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## Save the Date!

Sangamon County Farm Bureau Women's Committee invites you to the

# Fall Luncheon

November 13th @ 10:00 am  
at the SCFB Office.

Look for more information in next issue of the Sangamo Farmer

## Volunteers wanted!

Are you someone or do you know someone that loves educating our youth about Agriculture? If so, we have the perfect opportunity for you!

We are looking for volunteers to help with the 2019 Fall AgVenture Barn Tour. We will be traveling to Sangamon County Grade Schools the week of September 23-27 to teach students about Agriculture.

If you wish to help or provide animals for the barn, please call the SCFB office at 217-753-5200!

# County Annual Meeting



Left: Larry Beaty was named the 2019 inductee into the SCFB Farmer Hall of Fame. Larry and his wife, Diana, reside in Rochester, IL where they own and operate Beaty Farms.

Right: Larry and Diana Beaty pictured with SCFB President, Phil Sidles.



Colleen Martin pictured with President Sidles. Colleen, of Waverly, IL, stepped down from the Board of Directors this past July at the Annual Meeting. Colleen has been on the Board since 2016.



Randy Krone pictured with President Sidles. Randy, of Riverton, IL, stepped down from the Board of Directors this past July at the Annual Meeting. Randy has been on the Board since 2013.

# July 17, 2019



SCFB Manager, Jim Birge, being recognized for 20 years with SCFB by President Sidles.



Paxton Sidles, future SCFB President with his dad, Phil Sidles

