

# From the *Ground UP*



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## Curt Strode Named Master Farmer

FCFB member Curt Strode (second from left) was celebrated March 15th at an awards banquet luncheon in Bloomington, as one of five Farm Progress/Prairie Farmer Master Farmers for 2023. We were honored to nominate Curt, and to join with he and the other Master Farmers, their families, friends, neighbors and colleagues gathered to honor their work - five lifetimes of agricultural achievements! The other recipients from left to right: Martin Barbre, (Curt), Honorary Master Farmer Dr. Bob Easter, Ron Moore, and David Meiss. Congratulations to Curt and Mary and the entire Strode Family!



## ALOT Graduate

FCFB member Leah Glaser was one of 17 IFB members representing fourteen counties to successfully complete the 44th ALOT program. The 2023 ALOT sessions were held in Jacksonville, Springfield, Bloomington and via Zoom. The eight-week training program allows participants to study and develop leadership skills in the areas of communication, political process, agricultural economics, and global issues. Illinois Farm Bureau® (IFB) created Agricultural Leaders of Tomorrow (ALOT), an agricultural leadership development program designed to give participants a head-start on tackling tomorrow's leadership responsibilities. To date, over 1200 participants have graduated from the program. Leah is picture in the center, with (left) IAA District 15 Director Steve Koeller, and IAA District 16 Director Steve Stallman (right).

## New Ag Lit Coordinator Hired

I am Julie Werland and I began as the new Fulton County Ag Literacy Coordinator on April 17th. I was born and raised in Farmington and reside there now on a small hobby farm with my husband Dave. We have Nigerian Dwarf Goats and chickens. We are the proud parents of 4 children and 10 grandchildren.

After growing up in this area, I spent 20 years in Florida and Wisconsin but appreciated coming back to the Midwest values and small-town living. I love the honesty, openness and willingness to lend a hand that the farming community lives. I feel a passion for making sure children know how rich this area is in providing food and resources to the world and making agriculture relevant in their everyday lives.



In my spare time, I enjoy camping, fishing and my vegetable garden. I look forward to working with the teachers and students of Fulton County and with the Fulton County Farm Bureau community!

## LHS Foods Class Partners With IL Pork Producers

*Contributed by Nancy Williams, Family and Consumer Science Teacher, LCHS Dist 97*

April 4, 152 homes in the Lewistown and Bryant area were impacted by a storm, later classified as an EF3 tornado. The Salvation Army, the American Red Cross, local restaurants and individuals provided meals to the families affected and those helping them immediately and throughout the following two weeks.

On Friday, April 14 the Lewistown High School Foods class, under the leadership of teacher Nancy Williams, prepared and provided a meal for the community. The meal was made possible by the generosity of the Illinois Pork Producers, along with generous financial contributions from Compeer Financial, Havana State Bank, Ipava State Bank, Mid-America National Bank, Prairie State Bank and Trust, and Table Grove State Bank.

The meal consisted of ground pork patties (served as sandwiches), bacon-enhanced green beans, homemade macaroni and cheese, individually packaged carrots and celery, Texas Sheet Cake, and Rice Krispie treats.

FCFB member and IL Pork Producer member Dan Williams of Smithfield supervised the grilling of the meat. Fifteen students were there to grill and serve.

Approximately 150 meals were served. Some meals were eaten on site. Some individuals came and took meals with them to be delivered where cleanup work was being completed. Leftovers were kept at the Bryant Village Hall (which served as the command center for cleanup supplies and gathering space for residents) for families to be served the next day, too.

Because donors were so generous, the class was able to deliver 50 boxes of granola bars and pop tarts that could be used as "grab and go" breakfast items.

Our goal was to help the individuals in need of a meal. Another goal was to encourage our students to help others. Hopefully the good feeling they received will encourage them to help others again later in life!

We would like to thank ALL OF OUR DONORS for making this community service opportunity possible!



The Lewistown High School Foods Class along with the Illinois Pork Producers provided food to individuals impacted by the April 4 EF3 tornado that struck Lewistown and Bryant areas.



**MARCH BOARD HIGHLIGHTS**

The Fulton County Farm Bureau Board of Directors met in regular session on Thursday, March 9, 2023, at the Farm Bureau office in Lewistown starting at 7:00 p.m. pursuant to due notice given. The meeting was called to order and presided over by President Barry Fisher. Other board members present were Robin Fisher, Jeff Shelby, David Tolley, Nick Cleer, Linda Rock, and Keely Wilcoxon. Absent were Jason Chatterton, Bob Vohland, Seth Vohland, Levi Porter and Johnathan Lock. Also present was Manager Elaine Stone.

There were no correspondences for the month. There were no Affiliate Reports

The first order of business was Election of officers. Bob Vohland was elected Vice President. Keely Wilcoxon was elected as Secretary. Linda Rock was elected as Treasurer.

The minutes from the February meeting were emailed and mailed out before the meeting for the board members to read. These were approved with no corrections.

Linda Rock discussed the financial

statements for February and January. These were placed on file for audit. The audit has been completed.

The Membership Report was given by Elaine. In total, we had 970 regular members in February, 13 professional members, and 1478 associate members for a total of 2461 members. Regular member dues notices have been sent out and are due April 2023. This year we used the "combo form" provided by IFB, meaning the cards are attached to the billing, eliminating a second mailing and those associated printing and postage costs. The membership was approved.

**Committee Reports:**

**Young Leaders – No Report**

**Ag in the Classroom-** Elaine has interviewed candidates for the coordinator position. Discussion was held on bringing the adopted class down on May 24th. We will be making ice cream April 21st, May 5th and May 17th for various groups. We have a class at Eastview who wants to hatch eggs. We will be filling Easter eggs again as a fundraiser.

**Local Issues –** Wind and Solar meeting went well.

**Legislative-** 10-year battery smoke detector is a law. CO2 pipeline company has reapplied to ICC.

**Marketing –** Levi gave a market update. Corn is \$6.30 and beans are \$15.22. Wheat \$5.93. \$1.80 feeder calves.

DIRECTOR SCOREBOARD	May 2022	June 2022	July 2022	Aug 2022	Sept 2022	Oct 2022	Nov 2022	Dec 2022	Jan 2023	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023
Barry Fisher	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N
Bob Vohland	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	O
Robin Fisher		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Keely Wilcoxon		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Linda Rock	M	✓	✓	✓	✓	M			✓	✓	✓	M
David Tolley		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Seth Vohland		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Levi Porter	e	✓	✓	✓	✓	e	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	e
Nick Cleer	t	✓	✓	✓	✓	t	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	t
Jeff Shelby	i	✓	✓	✓	✓	i	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	i
Jason Chatterton	n	✓	✓	✓	✓	n	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n
John Lock	g	✓	✓	✓	✓	g		✓	✓	✓	✓	g

**Business service –** No report

**Promotion and Education –** Master farmer nominations to work on. Racoon tail event was discussion. More information is needed before we decide on doing this

**Manager's Report –** Working on meetings and getting events kicked off. Interviewed several people for the Membership Assistant position.

**Old Business:**

**A) Policy Development Meetings–** were discussed. We had a good turn out at both the Bernadotte and Canton meeting March 14<sup>th</sup>.

**B) County Board Ag Resolution and Pie-** March 14th

**C) Ag Week- March 21-27:** Ag week baby and county board procla-

mation.

**D) Springfield Visit:** Meet with legislators maybe

**E) Applied for Grant-** was submitted.

**F) Adopted Class Plans-** May 24<sup>th</sup> possible date.

**11) New Business**

**A) Summer membership drive ideas/pool party-** More discussion later

**B) County Fair Plans/Queen Candidate-** Queen Candidate Carlee Bellis, work the gate for Motocross.

**C)Country Agent Appreciation Dinner:** Aug 7th or Aug 14th at the Bistrot.

**Nick Cleer moved, Linda Rock and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.**

**New Membership Assistant Hired**

My name is Michelle Battefeld and I'm excited to be a part of the Fulton County Farm Bureau. I began my part-time position on April 6th shortly after the devastating tornado that ripped through our area. I was able to see firsthand how the Fulton County Farm Bureau and our community came together to support their friends and neighbors.



I grew up north of Mapleton, Illinois and graduated from Illini Bluffs High School in 1978. I married Mike Battefeld in December of 2016 and moved to Lewistown. Together we have a combined family of four sons, two daughters, four daughters-in-law, one son-in law and ten grandchildren. Fortunately for us, they all live close by so we can see (spoil) them often!

I retired from the Peoria City/County Health Department in July of 2022 after twenty-four years of service. I enjoy knitting, reading, travel, gardening, and dirt track racing, the last of which became a hobby after meeting Mike.

My grandparents owned a small farm in Fulton County and when I was young my sister and I would stay with them often. They raised hogs and crops and had a trucking business as well. I remember fondly listening to the bullfrogs by the pond at night while sleeping out on the sunporch and not so fondly "walking the beans with a hoe." I have also been learning some of the business/financial side of farming from my husband who is an agricultural lender at Prairie State Bank and Trust here in Lewistown.

I'm looking forward to this new experience and meeting you members in the future.



**Legislators Visit**

FCFB was honored to host our newly-elected Representative Travis Weaver (R-93) and his fellow "freshmen" Hoan Huynh (D-13) and Kevin Olickal (D-16) at the Carlberg Dairy in Canton on the afternoon of April 24th. Both of Representative Weaver's colleagues represent districts in Cook County. We thank Representative Weaver for arranging the visit and spending a couple hours with us. It was a great opportunity to become better acquainted with him, as well as learn from his urban counter-parts! Pictured left to right are Rep. Olickal, FCFB Past-President Bill Carlberg, Rep. Huynh, Rep. Weaver, and FCFB President Barry Fisher.

**FROM THE GROUND UP**  
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## Allies in Agriculture

FCFB President Barry Fisher, left, is shown with Fulton County Government Board Chair John Spangler with a plaque commemorating the County's passage of a pro-agriculture resolution at the County's March 15th meeting. Across Illinois, county Farm Bureaus are successfully working with county governments to support agriculture through this effort of the "Allies in Agriculture" program. County Farm Bureaus are building partnerships and helping county government officials to better understand and support agriculture. The pro-ag resolutions help local elected officials better understand agriculture's role in their local economy, such as providing jobs and generating property tax revenue used to fund services for all citizens. Successful county Farm Bureaus have tailored the resolutions to highlight specific contributions by agriculture sectors in their county.



We had over 100 FCFB members take part in our two Policy Development Meetings held this spring. Pictured here is Mark Raney, IFB Associate Director of State Legislation, at the Canton Meeting held at American Grille March 14. IFB Director of State Legislation Kevin Semlow joined us for the Bernadotte Café meeting on March 7th.

FCFB Director and Board Secretary Keely Wilcoxon and her husband Delson welcomed a son (their first child) on February 1, 2023. Kenneth Raymond Wilcoxon was able to join Mom and Dad at our Policy Development meeting at Bernadotte Café March 7th!



## Ag Week Baby Welcomed at Graham Hospital March 20

As part of the Fulton County Farm Bureau's celebration of Ag. Week (March 19-25), the group recognized the first baby born at Graham Hospital in Canton during the week. Milo Freeman was born March 20th at 8:30pm. His parents are Autumn Earnst and Bryce Freeman of Canton. Milo is welcomed by big sister Mesly.

Milo and his family were greeted by a "welcome basket" presented by the Promotion and Education Committee. The basket held two dozen baby items and products made from or representing agricultural commodities; all to remind everyone that you can't have a day without agriculture!

The first baby of Ag Week 2023 born at Graham Hospital in Canton, Milo Freeman is pictured here with his parents Bryce Freeman and Autumn Earnst.



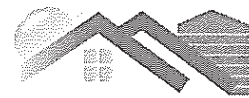
## Women in Ag Conference Attendees

FCFB was well-represented among the 200 women at the 11th Women in Ag Conference held on March 24th in Rock Island. Attending from the area were Vanessa Williams, Presley Stambaugh, Glenda Postin, and Leah Glaser. The event is sponsored by the IFB and organized by 13 County Farm Bureau Managers. Main take away from the day was despite the challenges we may face, it's all about thriving and showing gratitude that we get to have this lifestyle and be a part of rural America. Keynote Speaker Carey Portell from Missouri, shared her story of surviving a car accident to continue as a full-time cattle farmer, despite challenges. Breakouts throughout the day included managing farm input costs, update on carbon markets, review of farm lease agreements, securing the future of animal agriculture and farm stress. Closing speaker was Amanda Radke, a rancher from South Dakota, reminding us we sometimes need to innovate and pivot, leading with positivity and responsibility.

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Our AITC Committee made Plastic Bag Ice Cream for nearly 300 kids at Lincoln (Canton) Day on April 21st. We had great volunteers and parents help us that day, and we APPRECIATE THEM SO MUCH!



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