

From the **Ground UP**



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March/April 2024

Promotions, Education Committee Report

By Leah Brown

March 14th Director Training in Mendota with Elaine Stone

The main speaker was Bob Harris and he believes nonprofit organizations should be as efficient and effective as any business or franchise model. Mr. Harris reviewed the roles of the Farm Bureau Manager and the Board of Directors. One of the key phrases that we have heard before is to “stay in your lane.” Know what your role is and stick to it.

Also, what is the Farm Bureau’s vision and mission? When we are discussing an action, event or idea, are we keeping in line with our vision and mission? And where is that Strategic Plan? This was all good information for the new Director and an overall good reminder of many things in life. Am I staying in my lane? Do my actions align with my mission and vision?

March 21st: Ag Roundtable at Spoon River College

I sat in for Elaine and Barry and so glad that I was given the opportunity. The SRC Ag Instructor, Allyson Smith, has her hands full as she tries to revamp, extend and continue many of the Ag Classes and she is doing this as the only Certified Ag Instructor at the college. She also gave us an update on the Greenhouse and she is VERY excited to see what wonderful things come from there.

We also discussed how to encourage high school students to further their education at the college level.

March 22nd: Women in Ag Conference in the Quad Cities

I attended this GREAT conference with a friend and - Wowzers!!! What an event! The main speakers were INCREDIBLE and if only we could duplicate ourselves so we could attend ALL of the breakout sessions. The morning speaker was Dr. Annie Kinwa-Muzinga. What she was able to accomplish in the Congo was short of amazing. But she showed us that amazing can be done one step at a time...or as she said “baby steps.” Don’t think just because you are one person that you can’t or don’t make a difference. The last speaker was Annaliese Wegner of “Modern Day Farm Chick.” What a riot!!! Check her out on Facebook and she now has a Podcast called “Ag’s Most Okayest Farm Girls.” Nugget of advice: BE YOURSELF!

April 2nd: OMS Meeting held at Knox County Farm Bureau office

This event was very well attended by members from Peoria, Knox, Warren, Henderson, and Fulton Counties. Some of the concerns were how to get our “middle aged” demographics to be more involved. After high school and college we don’t have much to capture these individuals and to keep them involved. Also, how do we show non-members our value without “giving” everything away for free?

Other discussion items included how to reach people. Many do not want to read emails and text messages. How about messages that talk to you?

April 2nd: Composting, Gardening and Canning Event held at Peoria County Farm Bureau.

Two hours could not give these items justice. Sign me up for the next one. Composting can be a dirty smelly thing but it doesn’t have to be. Have a freezer bag that you put the scraps in and throw it in the freezer until you can take it out was one tip. I for one just feed my scraps to the chickens. Compost is in the form of animal doo doo.

April 11th: Lady Landowners Event held at Mason County Farm Bureau

I was glad I attended this program at the Mason County Farm Bureau building in Havana. Cheryl Mitchell shared some heart felt stories of farm legacies and some of the things we need to be thinking about for ours currently and in the future. She can coach a family through the emotions, challenges and obstacles and help them form a plan. She can be a part of your team when it comes to your Legacy.

March was VERY busy for promotions and member education programs. Things will slow down now as we approach field work. Everyone be safe and have a great planting season!



Fulton County Farm Bureau President Barry had the honor of accepting a Proclamation declaring March 19th Fulton County Agriculture Day from Fulton County Government Board Chair John Spangler. The proclamation was designated during the regular meeting of the Fulton County Government Board on Tuesday, March 12th.

Grazing Workshop Set for June 28

Mark your calendars for Friday, June 28th; our first ever Grazing Workshop! The program will be held at the farm of Jim and Cindy Cassidy near Table Grove. The program begins at 9am, includes lunch, and will conclude at 3pm.

There will be no charge for Fulton County/Illinois Farm Bureau members. There is a \$20 charge for non-members.

Presenters for the day will be Luke Jones, consultant with Understanding AG. Luke has years of experience building the resiliency of cattle and sheep operations with regenerative practices. Luke encourages livestock growers to stop thinking of farming operations on a year-by-year agenda and start planning and building for down the road.

Additional presenters will be Lara Lant - from Midwest Grass and Forage, Keely Wilcoxen -Soil Conservationist with the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and Kevin Brooks – U of I Farm Business Management and Marketing Educator.

The program is generously sponsored by MidAmerica National Bank. Registration instructions and due date will be posted on our website and Facebook page in May.

Fisher Appointed To Waterway Ports Commission

FCFB President Barry Fisher has been appointed to serve on the Illinois Waterway (ILWW) Ports Commission. The commission was created unanimously by both houses of the Illinois Legislature and signed by the Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker last summer.

The goal of the Commission is to develop a Regional Inland Port to serve Central and North Central Illinois. The Port will protect the integrity of the supply chain and could successfully attract increased (and long overdue) government and private business investment to the region and ensure we have modern, dependable, and safe access to global markets.

The Commission also supports regional economic development and sustainability goals. There is currently over \$1.5 Billion in projects now authorized by Congress for construction in the 10-County Illinois Waterway Ports Commission Area. But the region is at risk of losing access to these funds without a strong nationally ranked regional port advocate.

The ILWW Ports Commission is the only organization that can successfully implement a broad program to secure the federal funding that is available. The priority for the Commission will be securing funding through existing federal, state, and other programs for multi-modal transportation and natural infrastructure.

Per Illinois Department of Transportation, it is estimated that marine cargo activity being managed within the ILWW Ports Commission directly or indirectly supports 32,648 jobs within the state. These workers earn an estimated \$2.8 billion in wages and contribute approximately \$3.3 billion towards State GDP. The activity enabled comes from shippers across the state making use of facilities within the ILWW Ports, as well as the services supporting their movement of goods.

The Commission encompasses 10 counties, 5 state ports and 3 regional planning agencies. The Illinois River Basin includes 90% of the state’s population, 46% of the state’s agricultural production and 44% of the state’s land area. A major goal of the ILWW Ports Commission is to reduce the costs of grain and agriculture product transportation and exports, to directly benefit farmers in Central and North Central Illinois.

The newly-formed commission held its first annual meeting recently at the Peoria Riverfront Museum. Barry will serve a vital role, providing input to the group and receiving updates on building out infrastructure for the ports.



Women in Ag Conference

Representing Fulton County Farm Bureau at the March 22 Women in Ag Conference were Leah Glaser, Lindsey Lowe, Katie Brown, and Emma Green.

Summer Ag Institute: Exploring IL Ag

Jul 16, 2024, 8:00 AM – Jul 18, 2024
TEACHERS - Spend 3 days learning about agriculture in our backyards. There will be farm visits and industry tours in McDonough and Fulton Counties, presentations from IL Ag in the Classroom and commodity experts, and A LOT of fun.

Email FCFB at fultonfb@att.net for registration link!

2024
Summer
Agricultural
Institute

Sprouting Success in the Classroom



APRIL BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

The Fulton County Farm Bureau Board of Directors met in regular session on Thursday, April 11, 2024, 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, Levi Porter, Linda Rock, David Tolley, Delson Wilcoxon, Jeff Shelby, Nick Cleer, Seth Vohland, John Lock, Jason Chatterton, and Leah Brown. Also present was Manager Elaine Stone, District 8 Director Richard Carrol, and Stanci March and Blake Murphy from Doral Renewables.

Correspondence included an invitation to Cuba FFA Banquet on May 5th, thank you notes from Michelle Spiva, Sue Barth, Katie Baker, Ashley Tarochione, Makenna Johnson, Canton FFA chapter, and the Lewistown FFA chapter. We received some lovely St. Patrick's Day cards from our adopted class, as well as thank you notes for our lamb visit.

District 8 Director Richard Carrol gave an Organizational Member Strategy (OMS) recap. In June, the IAA Board is going out to meet with Ohio Farm Bureau, who is in the process of this same organizational direction study. Richard is on the Rural Medical Student Assistance committee. RIMSAP started in 1948 and is sponsored by the Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois State Medical Society. It is designed to provide doctors in rural communities in Illinois. This year 7 contracts were offered – 4 from district 8. He is also on the IFB rural veterinarian board and they will be awarding veterinarian scholarships at the next meeting. He will be running

for district director again.

Stanci March and Blake Murphy with the solar company talked about the Buckheart Solar project. They do not have plans for a battery storage area for this project. They are at the forefront of agrivoltaics – the intermeshing of farming and solar projects. Their programs involve 1200 head of sheep, mint cropping, low growth bee pollinator crops and bee hives, growing popcorn between arrays and between project and fence line. They are working through the approval process and looking at potentially breaking ground in 2027.

There were no affiliate reports. The minutes from the March 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 March. These were placed on file for audit.

Jeff gave the membership report. In total, we have 960 regular members at the end of previous month, 11 professional members, and 1533 associate members for a total of 2504 members.

Committee Reports were given.

Young Leaders – No report.

Ag in the Classroom- Robin reported classes are finishing up incubating eggs. There were 11 classrooms that hatched eggs. In April they will be learning about worms and soil. The filled egg fundraiser brought in around \$300 for AITC. Barry, Robin, and Elaine took a pair of lambs to Chicago to visit the adopted class. While there, they saw the entire school on 211 students. There is a AITC freezer meal fundraiser April 22 & 23. Linda will be writing the class in April.

Local Issues – Directors discussed local solar projects.

Legislative- David reported that IFB put out a call to take action on the wetlands bill.

Marketing – Levi reported that corn is down \$0.05 to \$4.30. Beans are down \$0.05 to \$11.55. Cattle prices are up. There is a scare

DIRECTOR SCOREBOARD	May 2023	June 2023	July 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024
Barry Fisher	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Robin Fisher	✓	✓	✓	o	✓	o	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Linda Rock	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
David Tolley	✓	✓	✓	M	✓	M	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Seth Vohland	✓	✓	✓	e	✓	e	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Levi Porter	✓	✓	✓	e	✓	e	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nick Cleer	✓	✓	✓	t	✓	t	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jeff Shelby	✓	✓	✓	i	✓	i	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jason Chatterton	✓	✓	✓	n	✓	n	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
John Lock	✓	✓	✓	g	✓	g	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leah Brown	NA	NA	NA				NA	NA	NA	NA	✓	✓
Delson Wilcoxon	NA	NA	NA				NA	NA	NA	NA	✓	✓

in the cattle markets as an old cow tested positive for the bird flu. In New York, a dead bird was that tested positive. Cattle market is holding steady and expected to hold for another year.

Business Service – Seth reported that we had received quotes on downstairs bathroom, upstairs bathroom, and waterproofing and painting the office walls from CR Builders, LLC. The bathrooms will likely be worked on next year. They will try to work in the smaller waterproofing and painting project this year. The Board accepted their bid and voted to move forward.

Promotion and Education – Leah attended the Mason County Farm Bureau Lady Landowners meeting where they discussed farm legacies. She also attended new director orientation and the OMS meeting.

Manager's Report – Elaine reported on all the activities from the last couple of months.

Old Business

A) Adopted Class Plans- Our Field Trip Tours for our St. Germaine 4th graders will be Wednesday May 15th. It will start at Barry Fisher's farm. Then the sale barn, Lunch will be served at the ballpark. After lunch, we will go to Steve Halsey's to see equipment. The day will finish with Carlberg's Dairy.

B) AgWeek Promo Recap – Placemats were used at a number of local diners. The Ag Week baby and parents were pre-

sented with a basket of agriculture products. Farmer Stanley went over well. Fulton County Farm Bureau Facebook page grew to 3,159 followers.

C) Applied for Grant Results – FCFB received \$25,000 from IAA Partnership Applied for Grant. We will use this gift to help with the restroom remodels.

D) Country Appreciation Event – For Directors, Agency force, and staff. Looking at Monday August 12th at the Bistro in Canton.

E) Pool Party – It was decided we will not hold a pool party this year.

New Business

A) May Board Meeting – Weather pending, the Board of Directors meeting may be cancelled.

B) Pasture Management Program – Our Marketing Committee has pulled together an outline for a grazing presentation program to be held late June.

C) OMS Meeting Discussion – Barry Fisher, Leah Brown, Robin Fisher, and Elaine Stone attended our District meeting earlier this month. Illinois Farm Bureau has one of the highest membership levels National-wide, and the study is to find direction to how best to serve our members and to adapt to changes in the near future.

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m. Weather dependent, the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 9th.

MARCH BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

The Fulton County Farm Bureau Board of Directors met in regular session on Thursday, March 14th, 2024, 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, Levi Porter, Linda Rock, David Tolley, Delson Wilcoxon, Jeff Shelby, Nick Cleer, and Leah Brown. Also present was Manager Elaine Stone and West Central FS manager Jim McNeely.

The first order of business was Officer Elections: Jeff Shelby was voted in as the new Vice President. Robin Fisher was voted in as the new Secretary. Linda Rock was retained as Treasurer.

Affiliate Reports were presented. Jim McNeely – West Central FS – noted that March is Farm Bureau & FFA donation month and they will be sending checks out. New Director training for their newest director Wes Strode and John Livermore was just conducted. New and exciting technology is being introduced and piloted including soybean genetics that will display markers when disease begins appearing. Dicamba is still able to be used in 2024, but most of their customers have shifted away to insite and they are using up their stock to wait and see about 2025.

The minutes from the February meeting were emailed and mailed out before the meeting for the board members to read. These were accepted without changes. Linda Rock discussed the financial statements for February. These were placed on file for audit.

Membership Report was presented. In total, we have 963 regular members at the end of previous month, 12 professional members, and 1512 associate members for a total of 2487 members.

Committee Reports we given:

Young Leaders – John reported that he and his wife Sydney attended the American FB conference in Utah.

Ag in the Classroom- Robin reported that 10 classrooms are incubating eggs and learning about chickens. Linda will write to the class in April.

Local Issues – County has settled the employee contracts that were up. The County Recreation Area campground near St. David has a new manager. Time clocks have been installed for all county employees. The county has put out a proclamation for ag week.

Legislative- Congressman Sorenson had planned to be at the Fairview Sale Barn today, but his plan was changed and he and his assistant didn't make it. The topics they were to talk about words like almond milk, meat labeling and the definition of meat

and how beef can't be used on fake meat. Country of origin meats – if meat is imported and processed in the US, it's considered US origin meat. He hopes to reschedule.

Marketing – Corn is down \$0.07. Beans are down \$0.01 to \$11.91. Wheat is down \$0.12. Livestock prices are going through the roof. An 1800 lb cull bull brought \$1.61/lb. 100 lb calves brought \$800/head. Bucket calves bringing \$600. 1200+ lb fats still around \$1.88/lb. Slaughter plants are cutting back on numbers slaughtered and there is a shortage of cattle.

Business Service – We have had a contractor come look at a complete remodel of all the building bathrooms, but we have not yet received a bid.

Promotion and Education – Ag week is coming up and directors discussed the MANY events we have planned.

Manager's Report – Elaine reminded Directors of important dates of interest forms were passed out to be signed. 2023 goals were passed out to be looked at. Leah & Elaine went to new director training.

Old Business

A) Policy Development meetings- held in early March were very well attended. IFB's Mark Rainy spoke at Bernadotte. Barry spoke at the Canton meeting as there was a conflict of interest for the scheduled speaker.

B) County Board Ag Day Proclamation – approved at the County Government board meeting on March 12th, designating March 19th as Ag Day in Fulton County.

C) Ag Week – is March 17-23 this week. We will recognize the first baby born at Graham Hospital with a gift basket. There will be special advertising on area radio.

Farmer Stanley will be featured at a different farms or locations every day, and these will on our Face Book page. The yard people will be used at Lewistown High School to illustrate the 168 people each farmer feeds. Placemats with the winning 3rd grade design are ready to be used at the local diners.

D) Springfield Legislative Visit – we will wait until summer to attempt again due to date conflicts

E) Adopted Class plans – On March 20th, Barry, Robin, and Elaine will be taking lambs to visit the adopted class. We are looking at May 15th for bringing the classes down to the farm.

New Business

A) Summer Membership Drive ideas/Pool Party – looking into alternative ideas in place of the pool party which Directors decided to not have this year.

B) County Fair plans/Queen Candidate – Carley Belless rural Ipava will be our queen candidate, the board will be working the gate Wednesday July 24th. Linda will do our bidding on livestock

C) Contribution to the Spoon River Partnership for Economic Development – Elaine discussed what the board is attempting to accomplish. Directors voted to donate \$500.

D) Director training – Leah had new director orientation with Elaine today and Elaine will set up a time to meet with Delson. Directors who haven't already completed the IFB certified director training are encouraged to do so.

E) House bill 1634 – Directors were encouraged to monitor the bill, modeled on California's carbon emissions, and voice their opposition

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

FROM THE GROUND UP
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FULTON COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Landowner Education Series Workshops

University of Illinois Extension is partnering with Fulton County Farm Bureau to host a 3 part educational series on helping farmland owners better understand their farm and come to informed decisions on setting cash rent or estimating how your farm compares to other farms as a farmer or an owner.

The first session will be at 2pm on Tuesday, June 18th at the Farm Bureau Building, and will focus on how to analyze a farm for productivity and fertility in order to establish cash rent and leases. Basics of leases and land stewardship will be covered.

In the first session, farm productivity will be analyzed. *The most often asked question asked of University of Illinois Extension regarding agriculture centers around "how much should I charge for or pay for cash ren."*

That's a tough question to answer unless more information is provided to help establish how productive soils are on a farm. Yield history helps to figure this out, but more information is needed. Your farm has identified soils that are rated in comparison to other soils in your area and across the state.

Additional meetings of the series will be held on specific topics in early September and in January/February. Register for the June 18th meeting by calling our office at 547-3011. There is no charge for Farm Bureau members, and a \$10 fee for non-members to attend.



Farmer Stanley Ag Week

FCFB celebrated National Agriculture Week by featuring “Farmer Stanley” each day of the week. Farmer Stanley “traveled” around the county visiting members on their farms, at their agriculture business, and at agencies that support our farmers and our industry. Farmer Stanley is a distant relative to Flat Stanley (you can research the Flat Stanley Project at Wikipedia if you aren’t familiar with his history).

Farmer Stanley spotlighted the vast careers and enterprises that make up our agricultural industry. If you weren’t following us during Ag Week, or are not a follower to our page, please do so now and get caught up!



The Lewistown FFA Chapter, under the direction of FFA Advisor Abbi Harrison set up an Ag Week display in the High School’s front yard. The display illustrated how many people each farmer feeds; 168 people!



AITC April Lesson

Fulton County AITC lessons for April has been earthworms. At left, a student in Miss Reed’s 1st grade class at Lewistown Elementary appears to enjoy the topic!

Ag Week Baby Welcomed

As part of the Fulton County Farm Bureau’s celebration of Ag. Week (March 17-23), the group recognized the first baby born at Graham Hospital in Canton during the week. Raelynn Raine Riner was born

Thursday, March 21st at 8:45 pm at Graham Hospital, delivered by Dr. Alyssa Crawford. She weighed 6 pounds 1 ounce and measured 19 inches long.

Parents are Serina Seelye and James Riner. Raelynn is the first child for both, and they reside in Havana.

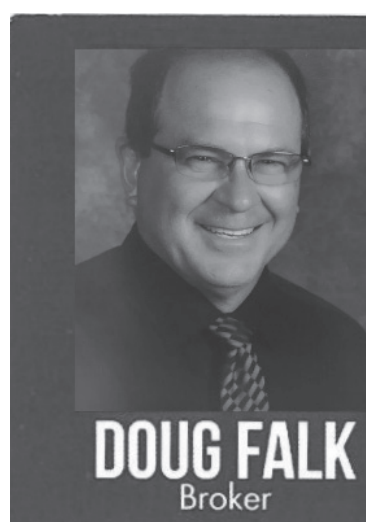
Raelynn and her family were greeted by a “welcome basket” presented by the FCFB Promotion and Education Committee. The basket held two dozen baby items and products made from or representing agricultural commodities; all to remind everyone that you can’t have a day without agriculture!



Fulton County Ag Week Raelynn Raine Riner was born Thursday, March 21st at 8:45 pm at Graham Hospital. She is pictured here with her parents Serina Seelye and James Riner.

Ag Week Placemat Contest Winner

At right, Kensley McConkey, 3rd grade student of Mrs. Boyer at Spoon River Valley Elementary, was the winner of the Ag. Week Placemat contest. Her design was printed on placemats used at a dozen area-restaurants during Fulton County Ag Week in March.



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