

# THE FARM POST

The Official Publication of the Pike and Scott County Farm Bureaus

Vol. 6 No. 4

January 2012

## IN KEEPING WITH TRADITION

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Yet, for many Illinois farmers, the tradition that means the most is the grassroots, member-driven decision making that stems from the IFB's annual meeting. Each year, Illinois farmers gather the first week in December to meet, discuss issues facing agriculture and set policy for the coming year.

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During the meeting, attendees recognized counties for program awards. Service awards were presented to members and friends of the IFB. Members also had the opportunity listen to keynote speeches featuring IFB President Philip Nelson and Richard Picciotto, the last and highest ranking firefighter to escape the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001.

In addition to featured speeches, attendees also had the chance to listen to comments offered by some of Illinois' elected officials. Speaking to members this year were Republican U.S. Senator Mark Kirk and Democratic U.S. Senator Dick Durbin. Both senators took comments from the audience and media, answering questions about the estate tax, potential regulations, improvements to the locks and dams system in Illinois, balancing the federal budget and the 2012 farm bill.

Most importantly, attendees also continued the tradition of steering the organization's policy. Monday, Dec. 5, delegates had a chance to conduct the necessary business to prepare for the coming year and the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) annual meeting.

This year's delegate session had several highlights, but the main focus was the business climate in Illinois and the concerns delegates had over the state of the Illinois budget and complications to business and industry, said Mark Gebhards, executive director, Governmental Affairs and Commodities, IFB.

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state," Gebhards said. "In fact, in their sense of the delegate body resolution, they called upon the Illinois General Assembly to work toward creating a positive business climate."

Delegates also debated wind energy, as well as a resolution calling for the implementation of state-wide regulations surrounding wind farms.

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Gebhards said delegates reiterated that if there are no livestock on the farm, no NPDES permit should be required. They also reinforced their desire to keep premise registration for livestock operations voluntary.

Surprisingly, the 2012 farm bill received the least amount of debate when it came to farm policy. However, Gebhards said the amount of debate does not signal a lack of interest in farm policy or that members aren't concerned with the 2012 farm bill.

"Our Farm Policy Task Force put forth their recommendations, so the work has really already been done," Gebhards said. "Congress wanted to have the super committee put forward a bill, but

that didn't happen. So, we're going to go through a more traditional process to develop a bill and the delegate body stayed with the recommendations that we've already worked on. Crop insurance is still the highest priority, followed by a revenue-based safety net." David Gay, Pike CFB president served on the Farm Policy Task Force representing IFB District 9.

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Finally, in their last order of business, delegates selected officers to lead the organization for the next two years. Having already served eight years as president of the IFB, Philip Nelson was elected to his fifth two-year term as president. Vice President Rich Guebert, Jr., also was re-elected to his fifth, two-year term.



The Scott County Farm Bureau was recognized for its achievements during the 97th annual meeting of the Illinois Farm Bureau held in Chicago December 3-6, 2011. President Jeff Schone accepts the program awards from IFB President Phil Nelson—Gold: Legislative/Political Process; Bronze: Local Affairs and Communication & Promotion.

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"Now that we're back to regular order, there's opportunity for us to take our Strategic Risk Reduction Program and bring that back to the attention of the respective House and Senate Agriculture committees and get them to understand why we really want to focus on the catastrophic risk reduction, risk management tools that are essential for our producers," explained Dale Moore, who oversees farm policy for the American Farm Bureau Federation.

On the other hand, having more time gives opponents of support to agriculture the opportunity to "inject their mischief into the process," Moore said. AFBF's farm bill proposal, the Strategic Risk Reduction Program, is an alternative to the "shallow loss" proposals other groups have put forward. The shallow loss proposals would provide government support to farmers who face losses of as little as 5 percent, but would only support a small portion of a farmer's potential loss, according to AFBF. Farm Bureau says its proposal, covering as much as 70-80 percent of a farmer's losses (depending on what the budget would allow), would protect farmers from the kind of situation that can put them out of business.

The House and Senate Agriculture committees in November submitted farm bill proposals to the super-committee in line with a goal to cut \$23 billion in farm bill spending. Those proposals were not made public, leading the news media to label the effort a "secret farm bill." However, that effort expired when the super-committee announced there was no way it would meet the statutory Nov. 23 deadline for an agreement.

Although the farm bill is no longer on the fast track, Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.), Senate Agriculture Committee chair, says the committee's goal is to complete an initial farm bill next spring to allow plenty of time for the rest of the process—floor debate, combining the House and Senate farm bills into a final bill and getting it passed. Stabenow said her committee would resume holding farm bill hearings in January. She said the committee would build on the bipartisan proposal the House and Senate Agriculture committees agreed on and submitted to the super-committee.

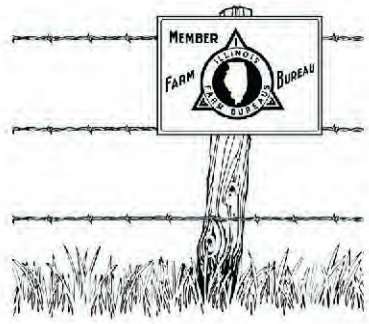
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"That's a significant reduction," he said. "That's going to take some careful managing of the resources that are left to ensure that you have risk management tools, risk management programs that are effective when producers need them."

"No matter how robust the farm economy is or how challenging it is, there are parts of the country that are doing well and there are parts of the country in terms of ag production that are just having a terrible time with everything that Mother Nature is throwing at them. We need a good, solid underpinning of a national program that provides the basic tools for producers to use and tailor to their operations."



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# HOWDY!

by Blake E. Roderick

## 30 YEARS...

The Winter Solstice is behind us; meaning days are getting longer. That in and of itself is fodder for a column but yet; it is still January. There are many long nights ahead before daylight hours reign.

Winter can be tough. It can be tough on animals, plants, and people which I usually include in the former. All living things in the northern latitudes have habituated themselves to the cold and short days.

It is in our nature, in our very DNA, to dig in for the inevitable winter. I find that I am not really different from my animal ancestors this time of year. Like others, I tend to rifle through the cache of nuts stored up for the winter, eat, then go back to sleep.

If you're mind is racing for a comparison, I would rather you think of me as a chipmunk rather than a squirrel—I don't like squirrels. A bear might be a good comparison except that they sleep all of the time during winter. I only sleep most of the time as I do have to get up and go to work at some point. There are days; however that I'd get more done sleeping.

We leave 2011 behind us. It was an eventful year. We witnessed the end of the Space Shuttle programs which after 30-years has inspired and heartened us on the full strength and ability of the United States to excel. It was a bittersweet experience to watch the final launch of the shuttle Atlantis, "the Grand Finale", last summer as part of our summer excursion down south. It was Betsy's and Rachel's first and my second launch having watched the launch of Columbia early in the program.

2011 saw the end of old nemeses. Thirty years ago, we were bombing Libya. In 2011, we were bombing them again. This time Gaddafi did not survive the onslaught of the world and his own people. A tap to the head and he is enjoying eternity in hell with his buddies bin Laden and Kim Jong-Il. Good riddance!

It is an interesting exercise to see where we have extended our military forces since 1981. In a rough time line, you can follow our forces into El Salvador, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Iran, Iraq, Honduras, Bolivia, Columbia, Peru, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Liberia, Somalia, Zaire (which isn't even a country anymore), Sierra Leone, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Macedonia, Central African Republic, Afghanistan, Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Serbia, Yemen, East Timor, Côte d'Ivoire, Philippines, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Georgia, Pakistan, South Ossetia, Nigeria, and now into Uganda. We operated out of bases in Europe, Africa, Central America, Asia, and the several oceans blue.

Our war on Islamic terrorists and Muslim

dictators have taken a big toll on the U.S. in those 30-years with grave casualties beginning with Lebanon, 911, and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. I don't see our conflicts with these folk ending anytime soon. There is something that rattles the soul about the motivations of people who kill themselves and dozens of innocents in the name of their god. I look deep into my soul and I cannot discern how one can ever have a lasting peace with these people.

Thirty-years ago, Ronald Reagan was president. Judging from the campaigning going on across the river in Iowa, I think the Republicans wish he was running again. In 1981, Illinois had a Governor who was not indicted or convicted of a crime. Maybe after this year's conviction of Blagojevich, it will be many years before we have another criminal as governor.

Greece entered the European Union on December 1, 1981. If you recall from this past year, it was Greece that set off the European economic downturn that threatens to lapse the world into another recession.

2011 also saw the passing of Steve Jobs. Here was a very quirky guy who helped change the world in a very big way. Thirty-years ago, we were using typewriters and rotary dial phones. Steve Jobs and his ilk moved us into a world where today's cell phone has more power than a roomful of computers did in 1981. Today, my cell phone connects to the internet, takes high quality pictures, texts, allows face to face conversations, finds directions, and still lets me to talk to people on the other end.

This leap of technology allows me to use social media, internet, e-mail, texting, and the like to "instantly" communicate with people literally all over the world. It is mind boggling. At least to me it is. To Rachel (13) and even to Evan (25), there is no marvel here; it is just another gadget to speed up communicating with friends.

You might have noticed a recurring theme here; that being thirty years. We've come a long way since that cold December morning in 1981 when I first sat down in this office. I'd like to think that in some small way I have had a hand in improving the way of life of those I was hired to serve back on December 1, 1981. We've been through many regulatory battles, economic disaster and rebuilding, floods, road building, school consolidations, and so much more—those will continue.

In its entirety, the last 30-years has been somewhere between pretty good and great. There are things that I have not been able to do but I guess I still have a bit more time to try and accomplish. I really do appreciate the support and honor of working for all of you these past three decades.

Probably the most important lesson I've learned in the past thirty years is that while people come and people go...those who remain are the most important people in my life. Of that, I am truly thankful.



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the AG AGENDA

**Bob Stallman**  
President, American Farm Bureau

### Ring in 2012 the Farm Bureau Way

It's hard to believe that 2011 has come and gone and the New Year is upon us. Looking back, Farm Bureau had a very good year. We saw the success of some of our priority issues and the undertaking of several endeavors that are significant to the future of agriculture.

Looking ahead, there will be twists and turns in the road that awaits us, especially as we delve into the farm bill this year. But, knowing that Farm Bureau is on the right track as we head down that road, I am confident we will be met with success at the end. As the old jazz song goes, "It's a new dawn, it's a new day...and I'm feeling good."

### A Toast to the Past

It was a good year for Farm Bureau's trade priorities. The Colombia, Korea and Panama trade agreements all passed Congress and were signed into law. Further, Mexico lifted \$2.5 billion of retaliatory tariffs against U.S. farm products, and the World Trade Organization welcomed Russia into its membership. All of these victories will result in increased U.S. farm trade.

On the tax front, an IRS provision was repealed that will allow farms, ranches and other businesses to forego unnecessary and burdensome Form 1099 reporting requirements. We also achieved repeal of the 3 percent withholding tax.

Farm Bureau also supported House-passage of the Energy Tax Prevention Act of 2011, which eliminates the authority of the Environmental Protection Agency to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act. And, we successfully urged EPA to not propose changes to the National Ambient Air Quality Standard for coarse particulate matter, which includes dust from rural areas. In an effort to secure regulatory certainty on the dust issue, we also supported House passage of the Farm Dust Regulation Prevention Act.

In 2011, Farm Bureau undertook a very important initiative with its participation in the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance. This unified, long-term and coordinated campaign for American agriculture is unprecedented in size and scope, with most every U.S. agriculture organization working toward one goal: moving the needle to gain consumer trust. I am confident this effort will vastly improve the connection between consumers and farmers and ranchers as we move further into 2012 and the future.

### Keeping our Resolutions

As we settle in to the New Year, there are also visible obstacles on the horizon. One such challenge will be to complete a farm bill by year's end that meets our expectations, while also staying in tune with the fiscal state of the nation. Farm Bureau supports the need for deficit reduction and tackling the nation's rising debt, and we understand that in order to do this, cuts in farm programs are likely. While we will fight tooth and nail against disproportionate cuts, we will do our share to get the nation's economy back on track. I am confident Farm Bureau is up to the task.

Water issues, too, still loom. Farm Bureau is leading both legal and policy efforts against EPA's Chesapeake Bay regulations, which unlawfully usurp states' authority. Left uncontested, EPA's unprecedented initiative could set the stage for federal mandates on land use and water quality regulations nationwide, which could negatively affect all farmers and ranchers.

Other issues on the horizon include continuing to work toward comprehensive farm labor and immigration reform plans, maintaining our efforts to combat anti-agriculture animal welfare initiatives, and making sure agriculture's voice is heard during the 2012 elections.

As we ring in 2012, I wish you and your family a happy, healthy and prosperous year. Or, as the Irish toast goes, "May your right hand always be stretched out in friendship but never in want." Happy New Year!

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Blake E. Roderick, Editor/Publisher  
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## EPA Cites 2011 Floods; Pushes Back SPCC Rule Compliance until 2013

Citing the vast nature of floods that hit U.S. farms throughout 2011, the U.S. EPA issued both a direct final (76 FR 64245) and a proposed rule (76 FR 64296) to amended the date by which farms must prepare or amend and implement their Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plans, to May 10, 2013. Prior to the close of the public comment period for the concurrent proposed rule, the Agency received written adverse comments concerning the amended compliance dates. This final rule supersedes any and all prior published rules, including the direct final rule, in the extending the compliance date to May 10, 2013, for the owners or operators of farms.

The amendment does not remove the regulatory requirement for owners or operators of farms in operation before August 16, 2002, to maintain and continue implementing an SPCC Plan in accordance with the SPCC regulations then in effect. Such farms continue to be required to maintain plans during the interim until the applicable compliance date for amending and implementing the amended Plans. Finally, the amendment does not relieve farms from any other applicable environmental regulations or requirements.

## IFB Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference set for Feb. 29-March 1, 2012

"Boot Camp for Advocacy Heroes" is the theme for the 2012 Illinois Farm Bureau Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference (GALC) scheduled for February 29-March 1, 2012 at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. With two days of general sessions and workshops, you will learn what issues to take aim at, how to scale the obstacles between you and your elected officials, and how to mobilize your team to victory. In other words, you'll learn how to be all you can be!

GALC workshop sessions will focus on a number of issues including farm bill, local government, rural development, transportation, environment, and legislative issue updates, just to name a few.

Again this year, you'll see firsthand what happens when hundreds of farmers, just like you, partner together on issues during the Statewide Legislative Reception on Wednesday evening.

You'll have the opportunity to see various demonstrations that will provide insight into how to be a hero on the farm, on the road and for the environment.

The cost of the conference is \$50 for Wednesday only, \$30 for Thursday only, or \$70 for both days (a savings of \$10).

To register for the conference or to obtain additional information, contact your county Farm Bureau office or visit [www.ilfb.org](http://www.ilfb.org).

## The Future of Agriculture

by Kent Hawley, Associate Dean of Transfer Education at John Wood Community College

When people think of Agriculture, they think of farmers, and while farmers are a great place to start thinking about Ag, they are just one part of many that make the Ag industry work. However, as we strive to find highly qualified people to work in the Ag industry, we need to relate to students in junior high and high school that you don't have to be a farmer to be involved in Ag.

Unless you are born into a family of farmers, it can be daunting entering that career. Land prices, equipment prices, and the sheer scale of farming it takes to make a farm viable these days can make the foray into farming formidable for those who don't already have a stake (although "locally grown" farming can get a newcomer's foot in the door on a smaller scale).

But farmers make up only about 10 percent of all Ag-related jobs. So where are all the other jobs in Ag? They are in fields such as Ag business management, horticulture, natural resource conservation, construction, engineering, forestry, Ag sciences, transportation, and many others. While farmers are the image of Ag, all of these other fields are necessary to bring food to the table and to ensure the sustainability of our resources.

In fact, there is large growth potential in plant genetics and research. Food sciences are likely to see an almost 10% increase in the number of jobs available through next year. These include food processors, seed geneticists, chemists that work on fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. Also included are nutritionists and lab technicians. The key is to get young people interested in Ag and to show those interested in science that great careers are available to them.

And when the average annual earnings are over \$50,000 per year, those jobs look pretty good.

According to Best Jobs for the 21st Century, those in the environmental fields will see huge gains in jobs. Environmental Engineers will see a 38% increase in the number of positions, almost 6,000 new jobs per year. Environmental science and protection technicians will see an astonishing 36% increase.

Some not-so-common professions are also in the mix. Fish hatcheries will need 25,000 more managers next year. Nursery and greenhouse managers will make about \$50,000, and we will 25,000 of them, too. And the logging industry will need 6,000 more loggers.

In fact, about the only Ag-related field we will need fewer

## Ag Science Delivers More Value Than Cents-Off Coupons

By John Hart

In these challenging economic times, consumers are looking to save money in any way they can. This certainly is true at the grocery store where many customers turn to coupons, advertising circulars and loyalty cards to keep more dollars in their pocket at the checkout line.

The diversity of American agriculture succeeds in providing our nation's consumers with a vast array of food products. Shoppers today can select foods based on production practice, locale or value pricing. They can make those purchases at traditional grocery stores, specialty venues, large discount chains, farmers' markets or even farm-direct stands.

Regardless of where shoppers go to make their food purchases, however, price always comes into play. And for people who make their decisions on price alone, it is important to remember that food prices could be much higher if it weren't for the efficiency of today's agriculture and food systems.

Compared to other nations, American-grown food is affordable. That is a fact that today is often taken for granted - so much so that many scoff at its mere mention. But even in this what-have-you-done-for-me-lately environment, it is still valuable to look at the underlying reasons for the success.

of in the next year is farmers and ranchers, but other careers in Agriculture are exploding..

As I have said in the past, everyone must eat. The need for Agricultural workers will not disappear. With an expanding global population, food production will be even more important, and finding new and better ways to be more efficient with our resources will become even more imperative.

There are millions of junior high and high school students who think of Ag only as farming. We need students of all levels to know what opportunities await them in Agriculture, whether they are in production, labor, marketing, business, or science. The future of Agriculture is depending on them.

Modern farm families and the methods they use to grow food help ensure U.S. food affordability and quality is among the best in the world. This fact goes far beyond any relief provided at the checkout counter by the redemption of a cents-off coupon.

Foremost among the tools farmers use is a delicate but precise combination of nutrient management, crop protection and advancements in biotechnology. A precise plan to control insects, weeds and plant diseases allows farmers to grow more food using fewer resources on fewer acres.

Since the 20th century, U.S. farmers have relied on advances in science and technology to meet the food needs of an ever increasing global population. It has been a true miracle of science, but it has also been a miracle of economics.

A new study conducted for CropLife America by agronomist Mark Goodwin reveals the economic benefits of pesticides. The research finds that American families save 35 percent on fresh fruit and 45 percent on fresh vegetables because of efficiencies in crop production as a result of crop protection products. The average savings on food from the use of conventional crop protection techniques for a family of four is 47.92 percent overall.

Goodwin's research also shows that the use of crop protection products adds \$82 billion in increased yield and

quality to field, nut, fruit and vegetable crops. Increased crop production from the use of crop protection products results in more than 1 million jobs generating more than \$33 billion in wages for U.S. workers, according to Goodwin's research.

The use of modern crop production tools by farmers also reduces the need for tillage, which cuts fossil fuel use by 558 million gallons per year. And thanks to scientific techniques, farmers now produce four times as much corn and wheat as they did in the early 1900s, without impacting forests or wetlands.

Because of modern agricultural practices and equipment, including satellite and computer technology, methods used to control weeds, insects and diseases today are very precise. Farmers also follow a strict set of regulations and are educated in selecting and applying only those crop protection products allowed by federal mandates.

As Goodwin's research shows, you can put a very valuable price tag on the economic benefits that American agriculture brings to the checkout counter. It remains a topic worthy of mention, even though for many consumers it has become a basic expectation. But being able to meet that expectation also has helped put other food quality choices in reach for all Americans.

John Hart is director of news services for the American Farm Bureau Federation.



Craig Ator, Seed Manager, Two Rivers FS, presents an \$800 check to the Two Rivers Farm Bureau Foundation's Agriculture Literacy Council at their meeting Wednesday in Pittsfield. The donation is made possible through GROWMARK, Inc to assist in agriculture literacy efforts in Pike and Scott counties. Pictured are Kristen Huls, Ator, Jenny Graham, Brenton Dean, Dale Plumer, and Andy Sellars. Not pictured are council members Adam Lawson and Rhoda Vortman.

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## VALUES KIDS LEARN THROUGH FARM WORK ARE AT RISK

By Lynne Finnerty

Every summer, rural teenagers get jobs on local farms to earn some cash while being outdoors. Some just enjoy helping a relative or neighbor on his farm or ranch – because it really is a great experience to drive a tractor.

Across rural America, young people help cut and bale hay on other people's land. In the Midwest, many a teen has worked as a corn detasseler, removing tassels from one variety of plants so they can be pollinated by another and create a high-yield hybrid. For others, their first job might have been picking fruit in an orchard.

By working on farms, their own family's or someone else's, young people learn about agriculture, how to respect and care for animals and how to work safely with farm equipment. They also learn important values, such as a good work ethic and taking on responsibility.

But under a Labor Department proposal, such work could be off-limits to minors. They would not be allowed to work on a farm that isn't directly owned by their parents or operate any power-driven equipment – even something as simple as a battery-powered screwdriver.

"Under this proposal, it sounds like youths would be allowed to push open the barn door, but whether they can flip the light switch inside is unclear," explained American Farm Bureau labor specialist Paul Schlegel. "But they sure couldn't use a flashlight or pick up a weed whacker. And they couldn't go up in the barn loft because it's greater than 6 feet above ground level."

The real impacts aren't fully understood. It could depend literally on how government regulators write the final rules and then interpret them. Most likely, young people couldn't even work on their own family farm if, like many farms these days, it's set up as a corporation or partnership, not wholly owned by the kid's parents.

The Labor Department says its proposal is needed to protect young people from dangerous work. However, as is often the case when the feds deal with an issue, the proposal goes too far. It's like trying to kill a gnat with a sledgehammer.

Farm work can have its hazards, and no one wants kids working when and where they shouldn't be. But ask any farmer how she learned to do farm work, correctly and safely, and you're likely to hear that she grew up doing it on either a family farm or through agricultural education programs, which also would be at risk if kids are not allowed to do many farm tasks. If we can't train the next generation of farmers, then the implications go beyond whether a teenager can earn a little spending money.

Parents, not the federal government, should decide what's safe for their kids. For those jobs that are particularly hazardous, the government has a role to play. But the government should at least write rules that won't threaten the very structure of family farms and rural communities.

The comment period on the proposal has closed. Now the government will continue with the rulemaking process. As it does, it is hoped that the rules will make more sense for how farms work today, and for youngsters who want the experience of working on a farm. It will be important for farm families and agricultural educators to weigh in to ensure that outcome.

Lynne Finnerty is the editor of *FBNews*, the American Farm Bureau Federation's official newspaper.

## FARM BUREAUS OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications for three scholarships accepted through March 31

The Pike and Scott County Farm Bureaus and the Two Rivers Farm Bureau Foundation have announced that applications for three \$1,000 scholarships are available to qualifying students in the two counties.

Two \$1,000 **Scott County Farm Bureau Scholarships** will be awarded to successful candidates—one from Bluffs High School and one from Winchester High School this spring.

The scholarship will be given to a graduating senior pursuing an education at a technical school, community college, college, or university of their choice. There is no course of study restriction but a major in agriculture will be given preference over other majors in the selection process.

cess.

Applications and selection criteria are available at the Scott County Farm Bureau, from guidance counselors, or at [www.scottcfb.org/documents/](http://www.scottcfb.org/documents/).

The **Rod Webel Memorial Scholarship** is available to qualified high school seniors who are dependents of Pike County Farm Bureau members and attend high school in Pike County.

The \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a student pursuing an education at a technical school, community college, college, or university of their choice. There is no course of study restriction but a major in agriculture will be given preference over other majors in the selection process.

Applications and selection criteria are available at [www.pikecfb.org/documents/](http://www.pikecfb.org/documents/), from guidance counselors, or at the Pike County Farm Bureau.

The Scholarship is endowed through gifts from Rod's family, friends, and the Pike County Farm Bureau.

The Two Rivers Farm Bureau Foundation was organized in 1994 to provide disaster relief to farmers following the 1993 Flood. In addition to this important function, the Foundation's mission is to assist Farm Bureau in providing quality educational, research, and scholarly programs that benefit its members in Pike and Scott Counties.

All applications are due on or before March 31.

## IAA Foundation Offers Scholarships to Support Agriculture, Illinois Farm Bureau Families

Agriculture students and Illinois Farm Bureau® (IFB) members and their children may apply for college scholarships offered by the Illinois Agricultural Association (IAA) Foundation. Fifty-six scholarships, ranging from \$1,000 to \$4,000 per year, will be awarded in total of \$104,900 for the 2012-2013 school year.

"We are pleased to assist students with the ever-growing expenses of college," said Susan Moore, director, IAA Foundation. "It is a great privilege to support our next generation of leaders, and encourage continuing education in agricultural fields."

Students may apply for a variety of scholarships, including the Illinois Soybean Association Crop Science Scholarships, which are new this year. Ten \$4,000 scholar-

ships will be awarded to students majoring in crop science at an Illinois university. The university must offer an agricultural course of study with a major in crop production or crop science discipline and must provide an emphasis on soybeans.

Six IAA Foundation scholarships, awarding between \$3,000 and \$1,000, are available and may be used at any accredited university, college or community college in the nation for the study of agriculture, agribusiness or an agriculture-related major.

An additional 40 scholarships, ranging from \$2,000 to \$1,000, are available to students that meet certain criteria, including area of study, place of residence, previous 4-H experience and college or university attended.

All applicants must be high school seniors accepted for enrollment or students already enrolled at an accredited college, university or community college. Scholarships are awarded for exceptional academic ability, leadership and financial need. Previous winners of an IAA Foundation scholarship are eligible to apply again.

A full listing of available scholarships, eligibility guidelines, applications and an activities template are available at the Foundation website, [www.iaafoundation.org](http://www.iaafoundation.org), starting Dec. 1, 2011. Completed applications must be postmarked on or before Feb. 1, 2012.

For more information, contact your county Farm Bureau, the IAA Foundation at 309-557-2230, or e-mail [charms-garman@ifb.org](mailto:charms-garman@ifb.org).

## SCHOLARSHIP.

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# HOWDY!

by Blake E. Roderick

## 30 YEARS...

The Winter Solstice is behind us; meaning days are getting longer. That in and of itself is fodder for a column but yet; it is still January. There are many long nights ahead before daylight hours reign.

Winter can be tough. It can be tough on animals, plants, and people which I usually include in the former. All living things in the northern latitudes have habituated themselves to the cold and short days.

It is in our nature, in our very DNA, to dig in for the inevitable winter. I find that I am not really different from my animal ancestors this time of year. Like others, I tend to rifle through the cache of nuts stored up for the winter, eat, then go back to sleep.

If you're mind is racing for a comparison, I would rather you think of me as a chipmunk rather than a squirrel—I don't like squirrels. A bear might be a good comparison except that they sleep all of the time during winter. I only sleep most of the time as I do have to get up and go to work at some point. There are days; however that I'd get more done sleeping.

We leave 2011 behind us. It was an eventful year. We witnessed the end of the Space Shuttle programs which after 30-years has inspired and heartened us on the full strength and ability of the United States to excel. It was a bittersweet experience to watch the final launch of the shuttle Atlantis, "the Grand Finale", last summer as part of our summer excursion down south. It was Betsy's and Rachel's first and my second launch having watched the launch of Columbia early in the program.

2011 saw the end of old nemeses. Thirty years ago, we were bombing Libya. In 2011, we were bombing them again. This time Gaddafi did not survive the onslaught of the world and his own people. A tap to the head and he is enjoying eternity in hell with his buddies bin Laden and Kim Jong-Il. Good riddance!

It is an interesting exercise to see where we have extended our military forces since 1981. In a rough time line, you can follow our forces into El Salvador, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Iran, Iraq, Honduras, Bolivia, Columbia, Peru, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Liberia, Somalia, Zaire (which isn't even a country anymore), Sierra Leone, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Macedonia, Central African Republic, Afghanistan, Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Serbia, Yemen, East Timor, Côte d'Ivoire, Philippines, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Georgia, Pakistan, South Ossetia, Nigeria, and now into Uganda. We operated out of bases in Europe, Africa, Central America, Asia, and the several oceans blue.

Our war on Islamic terrorists and Muslim

dictators have taken a big toll on the U.S. in those 30-years with grave casualties beginning with Lebanon, 911, and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. I don't see our conflicts with these folk ending anytime soon. There is something that rattles the soul about the motivations of people who kill themselves and dozens of innocents in the name of their god. I look deep into my soul and I cannot discern how one can ever have a lasting peace with these people.

Thirty-years ago, Ronald Reagan was president. Judging from the campaigning going on across the river in Iowa, I think the Republicans wish he was running again. In 1981, Illinois had a Governor who was not indicted or convicted of a crime. Maybe after this year's conviction of Blagojevich, it will be many years before we have another criminal as governor.

Greece entered the European Union on December 1, 1981. If you recall from this past year, it was Greece that set off the European economic downturn that threatens to lapse the world into another recession.

2011 also saw the passing of Steve Jobs. Here was a very quirky guy who helped change the world in a very big way. Thirty-years ago, we were using typewriters and rotary dial phones. Steve Jobs and his ilk moved us into a world where today's cell phone has more power than a roomful of computers did in 1981. Today, my cell phone connects to the internet, takes high quality pictures, texts, allows face to face conversations, finds directions, and still lets me to talk to people on the other end.

This leap of technology allows me to use social media, internet, e-mail, texting, and the like to "instantly" communicate with people literally all over the world. It is mind boggling. At least to me it is. To Rachel (13) and even to Evan (25), there is no marvel here; it is just another gadget to speed up communicating with friends.

You might have noticed a recurring theme here; that being thirty years. We've come a long way since that cold December morning in 1981 when I first sat down in this office. I'd like to think that in some small way I have had a hand in improving the way of life of those I was hired to serve back on December 1, 1981. We've been through many regulatory battles, economic disaster and rebuilding, floods, road building, school consolidations, and so much more—those will continue.

In its entirety, the last 30-years has been somewhere between pretty good and great. There are things that I have not been able to do but I guess I still have a bit more time to try and accomplish. I really do appreciate the support and honor of working for all of you these past three decades.

Probably the most important lesson I've learned in the past thirty years is that while people come and people go...those who remain are the most important people in my life. Of that, I am truly thankful.



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the AG AGENDA

**Bob Stallman**  
President, American Farm Bureau

### Ring in 2012 the Farm Bureau Way

It's hard to believe that 2011 has come and gone and the New Year is upon us. Looking back, Farm Bureau had a very good year. We saw the success of some of our priority issues and the undertaking of several endeavors that are significant to the future of agriculture.

Looking ahead, there will be twists and turns in the road that awaits us, especially as we delve into the farm bill this year. But, knowing that Farm Bureau is on the right track as we head down that road, I am confident we will be met with success at the end. As the old jazz song goes, "It's a new dawn, it's a new day...and I'm feeling good."

### A Toast to the Past

It was a good year for Farm Bureau's trade priorities. The Colombia, Korea and Panama trade agreements all passed Congress and were signed into law. Further, Mexico lifted \$2.5 billion of retaliatory tariffs against U.S. farm products, and the World Trade Organization welcomed Russia into its membership. All of these victories will result in increased U.S. farm trade.

On the tax front, an IRS provision was repealed that will allow farms, ranches and other businesses to forego unnecessary and burdensome Form 1099 reporting requirements. We also achieved repeal of the 3 percent withholding tax.

Farm Bureau also supported House-passage of the Energy Tax Prevention Act of 2011, which eliminates the authority of the Environmental Protection Agency to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act. And, we successfully urged EPA to not propose changes to the National Ambient Air Quality Standard for coarse particulate matter, which includes dust from rural areas. In an effort to secure regulatory certainty on the dust issue, we also supported House passage of the Farm Dust Regulation Prevention Act.

In 2011, Farm Bureau undertook a very important initiative with its participation in the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance. This unified, long-term and coordinated campaign for American agriculture is unprecedented in size and scope, with most every U.S. agriculture organization working toward one goal: moving the needle to gain consumer trust. I am confident this effort will vastly improve the connection between consumers and farmers and ranchers as we move further into 2012 and the future.

### Keeping our Resolutions

As we settle in to the New Year, there are also visible obstacles on the horizon. One such challenge will be to complete a farm bill by year's end that meets our expectations, while also staying in tune with the fiscal state of the nation. Farm Bureau supports the need for deficit reduction and tackling the nation's rising debt, and we understand that in order to do this, cuts in farm programs are likely. While we will fight tooth and nail against disproportionate cuts, we will do our share to get the nation's economy back on track. I am confident Farm Bureau is up to the task.

Water issues, too, still loom. Farm Bureau is leading both legal and policy efforts against EPA's Chesapeake Bay regulations, which unlawfully usurp states' authority. Left uncontested, EPA's unprecedented initiative could set the stage for federal mandates on land use and water quality regulations nationwide, which could negatively affect all farmers and ranchers.

Other issues on the horizon include continuing to work toward comprehensive farm labor and immigration reform plans, maintaining our efforts to combat anti-agriculture animal welfare initiatives, and making sure agriculture's voice is heard during the 2012 elections.

As we ring in 2012, I wish you and your family a happy, healthy and prosperous year. Or, as the Irish toast goes, "May your right hand always be stretched out in friendship but never in want." Happy New Year!

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Blake E. Roderick, Editor/Publisher  
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## EPA Cites 2011 Floods; Pushes Back SPCC Rule Compliance until 2013

Citing the vast nature of floods that hit U.S. farms throughout 2011, the U.S. EPA issued both a direct final (76 FR 64245) and a proposed rule (76 FR 64296) to amended the date by which farms must prepare or amend and implement their Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plans, to May 10, 2013. Prior to the close of the public comment period for the concurrent proposed rule, the Agency received written adverse comments concerning the amended compliance dates. This final rule supersedes any and all prior published rules, including the direct final rule, in the extending the compliance date to May 10, 2013, for the owners or operators of farms.

The amendment does not remove the regulatory requirement for owners or operators of farms in operation before August 16, 2002, to maintain and continue implementing an SPCC Plan in accordance with the SPCC regulations then in effect. Such farms continue to be required to maintain plans during the interim until the applicable compliance date for amending and implementing the amended Plans. Finally, the amendment does not relieve farms from any other applicable environmental regulations or requirements.

## IFB Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference set for Feb. 29-March 1, 2012

"Boot Camp for Advocacy Heroes" is the theme for the 2012 Illinois Farm Bureau Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference (GALC) scheduled for February 29-March 1, 2012 at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. With two days of general sessions and workshops, you will learn what issues to take aim at, how to scale the obstacles between you and your elected officials, and how to mobilize your team to victory. In other words, you'll learn how to be all you can be!

GALC workshop sessions will focus on a number of issues including farm bill, local government, rural development, transportation, environment, and legislative issue updates, just to name a few.

Again this year, you'll see firsthand what happens when hundreds of farmers, just like you, partner together on issues during the Statewide Legislative Reception on Wednesday evening.

You'll have the opportunity to see various demonstrations that will provide insight into how to be a hero on the farm, on the road and for the environment.

The cost of the conference is \$50 for Wednesday only, \$30 for Thursday only, or \$70 for both days (a savings of \$10).

To register for the conference or to obtain additional information, contact your county Farm Bureau office or visit [www.iflb.org](http://www.iflb.org).

## The Future of Agriculture

by Kent Hawley, Associate Dean of Transfer Education at John Wood Community College

When people think of Agriculture, they think of farmers, and while farmers are a great place to start thinking about Ag, they are just one part of many that make the Ag industry work. However, as we strive to find highly qualified people to work in the Ag industry, we need to relate to students in junior high and high school that you don't have to be a farmer to be involved in Ag.

Unless you are born into a family of farmers, it can be daunting entering that career. Land prices, equipment prices, and the sheer scale of farming it takes to make a farm viable these days can make the foray into farming formidable for those who don't already have a stake (although "locally grown" farming can get a newcomer's foot in the door on a smaller scale).

But farmers make up only about 10 percent of all Ag-related jobs. So where are all the other jobs in Ag? They are in fields such as Ag business management, horticulture, natural resource conservation, construction, engineering, forestry, Ag sciences, transportation, and many others. While farmers are the image of Ag, all of these other fields are necessary to bring food to the table and to ensure the sustainability of our resources.

In fact, there is large growth potential in plant genetics and research. Food sciences are likely to see an almost 10% increase in the number of jobs available through next year. These include food processors, seed geneticists, chemists that work on fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. Also included are nutritionists and lab technicians. The key is to get young people interested in Ag and to show those interested in science that great careers are available to them.

And when the average annual earnings are over \$50,000 per year, those jobs look pretty good.

According to Best Jobs for the 21st Century, those in the environmental fields will see huge gains in jobs. Environmental Engineers will see a 38% increase in the number of positions, almost 6,000 new jobs per year. Environmental science and protection technicians will see an astonishing 36% increase.

Some not-so-common professions are also in the mix. Fish hatcheries will need 25,000 more managers next year. Nursery and greenhouse managers will make about \$50,000, and we will 25,000 of them, too. And the logging industry will need 6,000 more loggers.

In fact, about the only Ag-related field we will need fewer

## Ag Science Delivers More Value Than Cents-Off Coupons

By John Hart

In these challenging economic times, consumers are looking to save money in any way they can. This certainly is true at the grocery store where many customers turn to coupons, advertising circulars and loyalty cards to keep more dollars in their pocket at the checkout line.

The diversity of American agriculture succeeds in providing our nation's consumers with a vast array of food products. Shoppers today can select foods based on production practice, locale or value pricing. They can make those purchases at traditional grocery stores, specialty venues, large discount chains, farmers' markets or even farm-direct stands.

Regardless of where shoppers go to make their food purchases, however, price always comes into play. And for people who make their decisions on price alone, it is important to remember that food prices could be much higher if it weren't for the efficiency of today's agriculture and food systems.

Compared to other nations, American-grown food is affordable. That is a fact that today is often taken for granted - so much so that many scoff at its mere mention. But even in this what-have-you-done-for-me-lately environment, it is still valuable to look at the underlying reasons for the success.

of in the next year is farmers and ranchers, but other careers in Agriculture are exploding.

As I have said in the past, everyone must eat. The need for Agricultural workers will not disappear. With an expanding global population, food production will be even more important, and finding new and better ways to be more efficient with our resources will become even more imperative.

There are millions of junior high and high school students who think of Ag only as farming. We need students of all levels to know what opportunities await them in Agriculture, whether they are in production, labor, marketing, business, or science. The future of Agriculture is depending on them.

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Foremost among the tools farmers use is a delicate but precise combination of nutrient management, crop protection and advancements in biotechnology. A precise plan to control insects, weeds and plant diseases allows farmers to grow more food using fewer resources on fewer acres.

Since the 20th century, U.S. farmers have relied on advances in science and technology to meet the food needs of an ever increasing global population. It has been a true miracle of science, but it has also been a miracle of economics.

A new study conducted for CropLife America by agronomist Mark Goodwin reveals the economic benefits of pesticides. The research finds that American families save 35 percent on fresh fruit and 45 percent on fresh vegetables because of efficiencies in crop production as a result of crop protection products. The average savings on food from the use of conventional crop protection techniques for a family of four is 47.92 percent overall.

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As Goodwin's research shows, you can put a very valuable price tag on the economic benefits that American agriculture brings to the checkout counter. It remains a topic worthy of mention, even though for many consumers it has become a basic expectation. But being able to meet that expectation also has helped put other food quality choices in reach for all Americans.

John Hart is director of news services for the American Farm Bureau Federation.



Craig Ator, Seed Manager, Two Rivers FS, presents an \$800 check to the Two Rivers Farm Bureau Foundation's Agriculture Literacy Council at their meeting Wednesday in Pittsfield. The donation is made possible through GROWMARK, Inc to assist in agriculture literacy efforts in Pike and Scott counties. Pictured are Kristen Huls, Ator, Jenny Graham, Brenton Dean, Dale Plumer, and Andy Sellars. Not pictured are council members Adam Lawson and Rhoda Vortman.

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## VALUES KIDS LEARN THROUGH FARM WORK ARE AT RISK

By Lynne Finnerty

Every summer, rural teenagers get jobs on local farms to earn some cash while being outdoors. Some just enjoy helping a relative or neighbor on his farm or ranch – because it really is a great experience to drive a tractor.

Across rural America, young people help cut and bale hay on other people's land. In the Midwest, many a teen has worked as a corn detasseler, removing tassels from one variety of plants so they can be pollinated by another and create a high-yield hybrid. For others, their first job might have been picking fruit in an orchard.

By working on farms, their own family's or someone else's, young people learn about agriculture, how to respect and care for animals and how to work safely with farm equipment. They also learn important values, such as a good work ethic and taking on responsibility.

But under a Labor Department proposal, such work could be off-limits to minors. They would not be allowed to work on a farm that isn't directly owned by their parents or operate any power-driven equipment – even something as simple as a battery-powered screwdriver.

"Under this proposal, it sounds like youths would be allowed to push open the barn door, but whether they can flip the light switch inside is unclear," explained American Farm Bureau labor specialist Paul Schlegel. "But they sure couldn't use a flashlight or pick up a weed whacker. And they couldn't go up in the barn loft because it's greater than 6 feet above ground level."

The real impacts aren't fully understood. It could depend literally on how government regulators write the final rules and then interpret them. Most likely, young people couldn't even work on their own family farm if, like many farms these days, it's set up as a corporation or partnership, not wholly owned by the kid's parents.

The Labor Department says its proposal is needed to protect young people from dangerous work. However, as is often the case when the feds deal with an issue, the proposal goes too far. It's like trying to kill a gnat with a sledgehammer.

Farm work can have its hazards, and no one wants kids working when and where they shouldn't be. But ask any farmer how she learned to do farm work, correctly and safely, and you're likely to hear that she grew up doing it on either a family farm or through agricultural education programs, which also would be at risk if kids are not allowed to do many farm tasks. If we can't train the next generation of farmers, then the implications go beyond whether a teenager can earn a little spending money.

Parents, not the federal government, should decide what's safe for their kids. For those jobs that are particularly hazardous, the government has a role to play. But the government should at least write rules that won't threaten the very structure of family farms and rural communities.

The comment period on the proposal has closed. Now the government will continue with the rulemaking process. As it does, it is hoped that the rules will make more sense for how farms work today, and for youngsters who want the experience of working on a farm. It will be important for farm families and agricultural educators to weigh in to ensure that outcome.

Lynne Finnerty is the editor of *FBNews*, the American Farm Bureau Federation's official newspaper.

## FARM BUREAUS OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications for three scholarships accepted through March 31

The Pike and Scott County Farm Bureaus and the Two Rivers Farm Bureau Foundation have announced that applications for three \$1,000 scholarships are available to qualifying students in the two counties.

Two \$1,000 **Scott County Farm Bureau Scholarships** will be awarded to successful candidates—one from Bluffs High School and one from Winchester High School this spring.

The scholarship will be given to a graduating senior pursuing an education at a technical school, community college, college, or university of their choice. There is no course of study restriction but a major in agriculture will be given preference over other majors in the selection process.

Applications and selection criteria are available at the Scott County Farm Bureau, from guidance counselors, or at [www.scottcfb.org/documents/](http://www.scottcfb.org/documents/).

The **Rod Webel Memorial Scholarship** is available to qualified high school seniors who are dependents of Pike County Farm Bureau members and attend high school in Pike County.

The \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a student pursuing an education at a technical school, community college, college, or university of their choice. There is no course of study restriction but a major in agriculture will be given preference over other majors in the selection process.

Applications and selection criteria are available at [www.pikecfb.org/documents/](http://www.pikecfb.org/documents/), from guidance counselors, or at the Pike County Farm Bureau.

The Scholarship is endowed through gifts from Rod's family, friends, and the Pike County Farm Bureau.

The Two Rivers Farm Bureau Foundation was organized in 1994 to provide disaster relief to farmers following the 1993 Flood. In addition to this important function, the Foundation's mission is to assist Farm Bureau in providing quality educational, research, and scholarly programs that benefit its members in Pike and Scott Counties.

All applications are due on or before March 31.

## IAA Foundation Offers Scholarships to Support Agriculture, Illinois Farm Bureau Families

Agriculture students and Illinois Farm Bureau® (IFB) members and their children may apply for college scholarships offered by the Illinois Agricultural Association (IAA) Foundation. Fifty-six scholarships, ranging from \$1,000 to \$4,000 per year, will be awarded in total of \$104,900 for the 2012-2013 school year.

"We are pleased to assist students with the ever-growing expenses of college," said Susan Moore, director, IAA Foundation. "It is a great privilege to support our next generation of leaders, and encourage continuing education in agricultural fields."

Students may apply for a variety of scholarships, including the Illinois Soybean Association Crop Science Scholarships, which are new this year. Ten \$4,000 scholar-

ships will be awarded to students majoring in crop science at an Illinois university. The university must offer an agricultural course of study with a major in crop production or crop science discipline and must provide an emphasis on soybeans.

Six IAA Foundation scholarships, awarding between \$3,000 and \$1,000, are available and may be used at any accredited university, college or community college in the nation for the study of agriculture, agribusiness or an agriculture-related major.

An additional 40 scholarships, ranging from \$2,000 to \$1,000, are available to students that meet certain criteria, including area of study, place of residence, previous 4-H experience and college or university attended.

All applicants must be high school seniors accepted for enrollment or students already enrolled at an accredited college, university or community college. Scholarships are awarded for exceptional academic ability, leadership and financial need. Previous winners of an IAA Foundation scholarship are eligible to apply again.

A full listing of available scholarships, eligibility guidelines, applications and an activities template are available at the Foundation website, [www.iaafoundation.org](http://www.iaafoundation.org), starting Dec. 1, 2011. Completed applications must be postmarked on or before Feb. 1, 2012.

For more information, contact your county Farm Bureau, the IAA Foundation at 309-557-2230, or e-mail [charms-garman@ifb.org](mailto:charms-garman@ifb.org).

## SCHOLARSHIP.

1<sup>st</sup> Farm Credit Services is committed to lending a hand to people in agriculture and rural Illinois. One way we help is with \$1,000 **Scholarships** for high school seniors who are pursuing a higher education in agriculture or a rural life-related field of study.

Details can be found at [www.1stfarmcredit.com](http://www.1stfarmcredit.com) or by contacting your local 1<sup>st</sup> Farm Credit Services office.

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