



THE SANGAMO *Farmer*

MARCH / APRIL 2020



*Advocating the Voice of Agriculture through Education
and Grassroots Legislation*

Phone: (217) 753-5200 • www.sangamonfb.org • farmbureau@sangamonfb.org

Springfield, IL • Volume MMXX Number 2

Upcoming Meetings & Events

MARCH

2 nd	Governmental Affairs Committee (Tentative), 6:00 p.m.
9 th	Young Leader Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
14 th	Foundation Trivia Night, 4:00 p.m.
16 th	Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
18 th	Women's Committee Spring Fling, 5:30 p.m.
30 th -31 st	AgVenture Barn Tour

APRIL

1 st -3 rd	AgVenture Barn Tour
6 th	Governmental Affairs Committee Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
13 th	Young Leader Committee Meeting 6:00 p.m.
16 th	Women's Committee Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
20 th	Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.

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

THE SANGAMO FARMER	
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SANGAMON COUNTY FARM BUREAU Office: 2631 Beechler Court Springfield, Illinois 62703 President: Phil Sidles Vice-President: Cathryn Ayers Seifert Secretary: Diana Beaty Treasurer: Michael Kinner Asst. Secretary/Treasurer: Adam Bailey	DIRECTORY FARM BUREAU STAFF Manager: James Birge, FBCM Outreach & Comm. Specialist: Lauren Burris Finance/Membership: Arika Leka Farm Bureau Tel. 217-753-5200 E-mail farmbureau@sangamonfb.org Individual membership fee of the Sangamon County Farm Bureau includes payment of \$2 per year for a subscription to the Sangamo Farmer.
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President's Report



Phil Sidles

Wow!!! What a couple of months. USCMA, China Phase 1, N.A.S.S listening groups, Illinois Director of Ag, meetings, more meetings, and oh yeah, meetings. Just to name a few. On our farm, like many others, we have new calves on the ground, and spring prep is underway. It's hard to believe coming out of what I like to call the 2019 hangover; we get to gear up and do it all again. We have also been quite busy in the county office as well. I hope many of you were able to attend many of the events that were held this winter. It so exciting to see new faces as well as seasoned veterans at those events. Something else that has me excited this year is the revamping or to steal the term from my V.P. the rebranding of some of our committee structures. I, more than anyone, knows how valuable time is these days and we are working to serve our members. We would really like to

see more members involved, but we also know that not everyone has the time for a monthly committee meeting. With this new structure, we are hopeful anyone that has an interest no matter if it's on-farm activities, ag in the classroom, political involvement or any other activity that the farm bureau puts on someone can find a way to get involved. Now, this doesn't mean that we will no longer have monthly committee meetings, so I encourage anyone who can make it still come. We just hope with some tweaking and adjusting we can reach everyone and get them involved. This will be a work in progress, so please stay tuned and be ready. I hope everyone has a great spring and can make as many SCFB events as possible and please everyone stay safe!!!

The Bureau According to Jim



Jim Birge

After the 2019 farming season that never ended, it's hard to believe we're about to start a new one. I hope we have a MUCH better year of farming this year.

As always, when farmers are busy in the field planting, spraying, etc., our General Assembly is busy filing bills and trying to get them through the committee process. This year looks to have a number of challenging pieces of legislation affecting agriculture and rural Illinois.

The list of issues is always long with thousands of bills that are all reviewed by our state legislative staff. That's no small task! But, there are some expected pieces of legislation that we already know will require our attention. The first among them (not in any particular priority of importance) will be to support the expansion of high-speed broadband across rural Illinois while protecting the private property rights of farmers during the installation and maintenance phases. Broadband infrastructure can be both buried and overhead. Farmers must be protected from blatant disregard of their rights to allow access on their land. But it's a double edged sword. Farmers and rural residents also need faster and higher quality Internet service to be competitive and enjoy the same access as urban residents do. It'll be a balancing act to be successful at both, but it can be done.

Other anticipated legislation will likely deal with livestock matters. Antibiotic use, environmental/climate impact, and livestock facility siting (LMFA). Activists are always on the attack when it comes to many things, but livestock production is at the top of many of their lists. Whether you raise livestock yourself or grow the grain to feed them, we'll need all hands on deck to continue to fight these relentless attacks.

Finally, there's the constitutional amendment on this November's ballot to change your income tax from a flate rate to a progressive income tax. If you've read the plea for support to our Political Involvement Committee that was included in your dues notice, you'll understand what is at stake. If you have already made a contribution to the committee's advocacy fund, THANK YOU! If you haven't, I sincerely ask that you consider it. Any contribution to help us fight the progressive income tax will be greatly appreciated. It'll be a small investment compared to the anticipated increases in your income taxes.

Until next time, be safe as spring field work gets underway. I wish you the best as we begin the 2020 farm and ranch season.

Committee Reports



Stephen Prather

The young leaders truly enjoyed the young leader conference held in East Peoria January 31st & February 1st. We had eight young leaders that were able to join us for a great time of fellowship and learning about topics important to

agriculture. A highlight for many of us, was getting to hear from Jim "The Rookie" Morris about how we persevere through our struggles and help push those around us.

February 10th we hosted our 1st "Ag After Hours" event with Country Financial Agent, Ed Legner, informing us about the importance of financial planning for the future by starting today. We would like to thank Ed for the great discussion and the 18 individuals who joined us. A great time was had by all. March 10th we will be hosting our FFA Acquaintance Day to take Sangamon County FFA chapters around the county to learn about different aspects in the Ag industry. We will be touring Springfield Plastics, Scoular Company Elevator, and finish our day off with lunch at Lincoln Land Community College to learn about their programs of study. We truly enjoy working with the local FFA chapters.

I wish you all the luck as spring field work begins in the next month or so.



Allen Entwistle

Finally, some resolution to pending trade agreements! It seems as though this day would never come. The United States Mexico Canada Agreement (USMCA) is now law, China has agreed to at least the beginning of a total trade agreement, and others like

the United Kingdom are getting ready to begin. As long as our trading partners do what they say they'll do, specifically China, we'll be entering a new era of trade success. But the markets really haven't made any significant progress since all of these announcements. Probably because they have seen the history of China doing what they say they will. It'll take more than words and signed agreements for markets to believe it and respond with higher prices. Like usual, we'll just have to keep waiting for things to take hold.

Our GAC recently met with a number of our members of the General Assembly both at a recent legislative reception held during the IFB Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference and during a joint meeting of our board and our GAC. We continue to thank them for the work they do on behalf of our farmers and hold them accountable for actions that are not congruent with the betterment of agriculture or the state as a whole.

In the next few months, we'll be meeting with members of the Sangamon County Board and countywide elected officials to again share our ideas for a prosperous rural Sangamon County. It's always a productive meeting and provided both us and them with an understanding of the challenges each face and an opportunity to work together to address them.

Don't forget to vote in the March 17th primary. Some of our members have local referendums that will affect their taxes. Make sure you learn about any referendums that'll be on your ballot and vote with an educated conscious. One such referendum involves the New Berlin School District. Learn more about both sides of the issue inside this edition of the Sangamo Farmer.

YOUNG LEADERS

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS



SCFB Young Leaders attended the Young Leader Conference on February 1st in Peoria. L to R: Jay Seigrist, Andy Morehouse, Katie King, Stephen Prather, Ethan Krone, Emily Prather, Charles Mayfield, and Gary Reavis



Janet Edwards

Bring on SPRING!! I don't know about everyone else, but I am ready for some warmth and SUNSHINE.

The FS/Farm Bureau Appreciation lunches are over and I would like to take the time thank all of the FS plants and employees for their dedication in showing their appreciation to their customers and our members. Also, to the Sangamon County Farm Bureau staff for getting all of the "prizes" we are able to give away during the luncheons and for their help in setting these events up. Last, but definitely not Least, to the committee members who give their time and talents to make all of the delicious desserts for these meals, you are greatly appreciated.

Now, on to the next activity for your Sangamon County Farm Bureau, TRIVIA!!! The annual Trivia Night will be held on Saturday, March 14th at BUNKERS in Illiopolis. Doors will open at 3 p.m. and this year, no outside food or drink will be allowed at the venue (there will be food and drinks available for purchase). We are still in need of sponsors for the Trivia rounds/tables, and baskets for the raffle/silent auction but most of all, we need our members to sign up their teams for that day. The proceeds from this event go to our Foundation for college scholarships. Please see the flyer in this issue for further information on how to sign up or be a sponsor. Also, if you would like to donate a basket, please get a hold of the office and let them know. This is a fun night of fellowship and friendly competition!!

By the time the next issue of the Sangamo Farmer comes out, we hopefully will be in the field or be getting very close to starting our field work with warmer temperatures and SUNSHINE. In the mean time, finish up your bookwork, get your taxes done and consider where you would like to put your talents to work in your county Farm Bureau program.

Until next issue, God Bless and be safe!!

MEMBER & PR



Matt Heissinger

For this summer we are putting together a training session for using QuickBooks on your farm. Kerber, Eck, & Braeckel accounting firm here in Springfield will be providing expert instruction and professional support for our members who attend this session. We're proud to partner

with KEB to bring this special training to you. If you are already using QuickBooks, this session can help you to do it better. But if you're not a QuickBooks user and want to find out if it can help your business, then this session is for you also. Keep an eye out for more information in upcoming issues of the Sangamo Farmer, our website, and on our social media pages.

MARKETING



Cassie Bennett

Hello SCFB members! I hope by the time your reading this article the snow has subsided! The WC is hosting another spring fling on March 18th at the office 5:30, so be sure to RSVP! We are having Deanne Frieders from This Farm Girl Cooks come speak to us on ways to get ahead with

cooking! I have personally been following her for years and am really excited to meet her! We also have a date set for our bus trip on May 28th to the Busch brewery, so mark your calendars, this trip is always so much fun!

WOMEN'S



William N Etherton Scholarship

The William N. Etherton Agricultural Scholarship Fund was created in conjunction with the Sangamon County Farm Bureau Foundation in 2019 by his family. The objective is to award one Sangamon

County student who is pursuing a degree in Agriculture a \$500 scholarship. The Scholarship Fund was created to honor the memory of William N. "Bill" Etherton who passed away on September 18, 2019. Bill, of Buffalo, IL, was raised on the family farm and married Peggy Higginson in 1946. He was then enlisted in the 11th Airborn Division as a paratrooper and served in Japan for two years. Upon his return, he and Peggy started raising corn, beans, hogs, cattle, and their four children. Bill was also a member of the Sangamon County Farm Bureau Board, Pork Producers, Sangamon County Extension Council, Mechanicsburg Farmers Grain Elevator, 4-H leader in Lanesville, Illiopolis School Board, Illini Bank and one of the founding members of the Mechanicsburg Citizens Bank. Bill believed that giving young people an opportunity to study agriculture is an important step to ensuring that American agriculture remains the world leader in food, fiber, and fuel.

Applications, with a picture of the applicant must be received by the Sangamon County Farm Bureau Office by March 31, 2020. For the scholarship application and more information, please visit www.sangamonfb.org.

Spring Fling

March 18, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

2631 Beechler Ct
Springfield, IL 62703

Hosted By:

The Sangamon County Farm Bureau Women's Committee

Guest Speaker:

Deanne Frieders from This Farm Girl Cooks
"Ways to Get Ahead with Meal Prep"

Please join us for food, fun, and fellowship!

The Women's Committee will provide fried chicken with homemade side dishes and desserts.

Non-perishable food donations will be accepted to support the Harvest for All Campaign

RSVP: 217-753-5200 or email lburriss@sangamonfb.org by March 13th

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20:20 Vision on Ag Safety

Mental Health

Transportation Safety

Weather Disasters

Confined Spaces

Farmer Wellness



AG SAFETY AWARENESS PROGRAM WEEK
March 1-7, 2020



SANGAMON COUNTY FARM BUREAU FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

2020

The Sangamon County Farm Bureau Foundation is a charitable organization recognized by the IRS as a public charity. The focus of the foundation is to advance educational opportunities and understanding of the agricultural industry, support research opportunities for the betterment of agriculture, and offer general promotion of the industry. A key goal of the foundation is to fund awards and scholarships for the benefit of education programs.



APPLICATION CRITERIA:

- Be a high school senior graduating in 2020 or a first year student in a postsecondary school.
- Be a Sangamon County Farm Bureau member, spouse of a member or child of a member. (Minimum 1 year)
 - Be accepted for enrollment or be enrolled at a post-secondary school.
 - Exhibit potential for successful completion of course studies.
 - Be a resident of Sangamon County, Illinois.



**Sangamon
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March/April 2020

FOR THE APPLICATION AND MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

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LOCAL FINANCIAL REPRESENTATIVES/AGENCY MANAGERS HONORED BY COUNTRY FINANCIAL

COUNTRY Financial recently named their Agency Managers and Financial Representatives to its distinguished All American team. They are among a select group of COUNTRY Financial agency managers and financial representatives who qualified for the award. COUNTRY Financial has more than 2,000 agency managers and financial representatives in 17 states.

All American is awarded each year by COUNTRY Financial to agency managers and financial representatives who have excelled in identifying insurance products and financial solutions that fit the needs of their customers. Agency managers and financial representatives who earn the award provide outstanding service to their customers.

The following agency managers and financial representatives have been named to the All American team: Julie Hale-Miller of Chatham, Mike O'Brien of Springfield, Jared Zueck of Springfield, Megan Henley-Brown of Chatham and Agency Manager, JR Earley of Carlinville earned All American distinctions.



JULIE HALE-MILLER



MIKE O'BRIEN



JARED ZUECK



MEGAN HENLEY-BROWN



JR EARLEY



You will have three options for responding:



Online.



Phone.



Mail.

Get Counted!

Census Day 2020: April 1

Once a decade, America comes together to count every resident in the United States, creating national awareness of the importance of the census and its valuable statistics.

It counts our population and households, providing the basis for reapportioning congressional seats, redistricting, and distributing more than \$675 billion in federal funds to support states, counties and communities' vital programs — impacting education, fire and emergency response services, transportation, employment, housing, health care and public policy.

By April 1, every home will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census.



Your local County Farm Bureau will serve as a Census Access Center by providing a space to complete the survey online via an iPad for households that have difficulty with reliable internet access.

*Source: <https://2020census.gov/content/dam/2020census/materials/partners/2019-10/census101.pdf>

Sangamon County Farm Bureau Young Leaders **Annual Antique Tractor** Contest & Drive

Saturday, June 20, 2020 · 9:00 AM

Drive:

Unloading begins at 8:00 am at the New Berlin High School
300 W. Ellis St · New Berlin, IL 62670
Drive will begin at 9:00 a.m.

Contest:

Tractors will line up at the Sangamon County Fairgrounds for voting at 11:30
316 W Birch St · New Berlin, IL 62670
Voting will conclude at 12:30 p.m.
Awards Ceremony at 1:00 p.m.

Registration:

Due June 10th, \$30- Includes T-Shirt, Fair Entry, and Lunch
Please no steel wheeled tractors

Raindate is June 27, 2020 during the Sangamon County 4-H Show

PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE HARVEST FOR ALL CAMPAIGN!

BE SURE TO WRITE 2020 WHEN SIGNING DOCUMENTS!

Not only did we have to break the habit of writing 2019 at the turn of the new year, but the new year opened up a door with a new opportunity for scammers. According to the National Association of Consumer Advocates, abbreviating the year 2020 opens up the chances of fraud when it comes to signing legal documents. If you date a document with 3/4/20, it can be easily changed to 3/4/2019 or 3/4/2021. It's better to be safe than sorry; write 2020 on legal documents and checks to avoid fraud.

Source: USA Today

Local Referendums – Know How it Affects You BEFORE You Vote

On March 17th, like many elections, some of you will have to consider whether to support local referendums or not. This election holds a total of three referendums across Sangamon County. They are as follows:

PROPOSITION CONCERNING CONTINUED PROHIBITION OF THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR AT RETAIL IN GARDNER TOWNSHIP

Shall the Prohibition of the sale at retail of Alcoholic liquor be continued in Gardner Township, County of Sangamon, State of Illinois?

PROPOSITION TO ISSUE \$39,500,000 SCHOOL BUILDING BONDS

Shall the Board of Education of New Berlin Community Unit School District Number 16, Sangamon and Morgan Counties, Illinois, build and equip a new school building, improve safety and security, alter, demolish, repair, renovate, equip and abate asbestos at portions of the existing junior/senior high school building, make site improvements, and issue bonds of said School District to the amount of \$39,500,000 for the purpose of paying the costs thereof?

PROPOSITION TO ISSUE \$40,000,000 SCHOOL BUILDING BONDS

Shall the Board of Education of Williamsville Community Unit School District Number 15, Sangamon, Logan and Menard Counties, Illinois, build and equip additions to and alter, repair and equip the Williamsville High School, Williamsville Junior High School and Sherman Elementary School Buildings, improve school sites and issue bonds of said School District to the amount of \$40,000,000 for the purpose of paying the costs thereof?

Sangamon County Farm Bureau has been aware of the contentiousness of the referendum affecting New Berlin School District. While we are not taking a position on the referendum, we do want to ensure that you know the facts and hear from both sides of the issue.

The proponents of building a new school cite these benefits:

- Improving overcrowding
- Safety/Security
- Educational Upgrade

Excerpt from the Superintendent's Formal Recommendation as requested by the school board:

- *A 7.5 million dollar reduction will mean that we will have to make cuts from what was presented and I believe that work can be done by utilizing our new community engagement process that INSPIRE has created.*
- *These reductions will be a challenge but I believe we have the ability to produce a facility that will greatly increase the learning environment for our students while also addressing our unavoidable and inevitable facility needs.*
- *A voted referendum of \$39.5 million dollars would have a tax rate impact of approximately 78 cents on the district's tax rate.*
- *This recommendation is about honoring the feedback from the INSPIRE Committee and giving our constituents an opportunity to voice their opinion at the ballot. It is not about imposing a tax rate on our constituents. It is about allowing the voters to make the decision for themselves as to how our community wants to address our facility needs and create the learning environment that is best for New Berlin."*

Opponents of the referendum cite these consequences:

The school board by a vote of 5-2 voted in favor of putting the \$39,500,00 dollar tax increase on the ballot for new school building(s). The board also indicated they would borrow another \$7,000,000 using the 1% county sales tax. The district also owes \$10,000,000 for the remaining debt on the elementary school. This leaves an anticipated total debt of \$56,500,000.

- Growth at NB has been 5% per 5years or less than 1% per year
- New Berlin has 270 high school students presently
- Pleasant Plains has 423 high school students
- If present growth continues New Berlin will have 350 students in the High School in 25 years
- Smaller than Pleasant Plains is today!!!
- Our current tax rate is \$4.66 per \$100 assessed valuation.
- Our tax rate, if the referendum passes will be \$5.49 per \$100 assessed valuation, an 18% increase. Some homes will increase property tax by \$1,000 or more per year.
- School board members have said twice that they have no definite plans as to how to spend all the money.
- Our school needs improvement, but a lesser cost alternative should be considered, but NB school board refused in a 5-2 vote to consider anything less than \$39.5 million.
- The \$56,500,000 will cost taxpayers over \$78,000,000 over the 25 years of debt through annual taxpayer funded payments
- County growth rate has matched the State population similarly

THESE ARE IMPORTANT ISSUES AFFECTING YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY. PLEASE BE DILIGENT TO LEARN THE FACTS, VOTE ON MARCH 17TH, AND VOTE YOUR CONSCIENCE!

SANGAMON COUNTY FARM BUREAU FOUNDATION

Trivia

Night

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*Proceeds benefit the Sangamon County Farm Bureau Foundation
in order to provide scholarships to local students and funding for
agricultural education programs.*



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