

Wyoming Agriculture

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FARM BUREAU® FEDERATION

WyFB 105th Annual Meeting Nov. 7-9, 2024 in Casper

BY KERIN CLARK

Gather at the Table. Grassroots involvement. Policy development. Leadership. Advocacy. Conversation. It all starts at the table. Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation members have been gathering at the table for 105 years and counting. You make a difference for your future by gathering at the table and starting the policy development at your local level.

Join your fellow farmers and ranchers Nov. 7-9, 2024 in Casper for the 105th Annual Meeting of the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation. The Farm Bureau Federation's grassroots policy development is the strength of the Federation.

Voting delegates from the county Farm Bureau Federations participate in policy discussion, elect officers and ultimately chart the policy course for the coming year. Members also enjoy net-



working with other farmers and ranchers, seeing old friends and making new friends.

'Make it Magnetic' Wyoming Foundation Workshop and Service

The WyFB Foundation is hosting a "Make it Magnetic" workshop and service project the morning of Nov. 7 from 8 to 11:30 a.m. Margee Wolff, American Farm Bureau Fed-

eration Vice President Leadership, Education & Engagement, will lead the "Make it Magnetic: How to Attract Unbeatable Volunteers" workshop from 8 to 9:30 a.m. In this fun and interactive session, you'll explore the principles that attract members to volunteer opportunities and learn the tools you can use to help new volunteers stick with your organization for years to come.

GATHER AT THE TABLE... Page 5

Proposed Wyoming constitutional amendment on tax tiers raises concerns for farmers, ranchers, and businesses

BY CALLIE HANSON

FOR WYOMING AGRICULTURE

The Wyoming legislature's proposal to create an additional tax tier is generating mixed reactions among state officials and representatives from the agriculture sector. The changes aim to add an additional property tax tier exclusive to residential properties, but there are still many unanswered questions and "what ifs".

Brenda Henson, the Director of the Wyoming Department of Revenue noted that currently, Wyoming's property tax structure is divided into three tiers: mineral production, which is taxed at 100%, industrial property at 11.5%, and all other property, including commercial, agricultural, and residential, at 9.5%.

The proposed amendment would create a new category specifically for residential property, and the legislature would need to define exactly what constitutes "residential real property. This could include everything from single-family homes to multi-family rental properties, and how these properties are assessed remains uncertain.

Jeremiah Reiman, the executive director of Wyoming County Commissioners, noted the effects on agricultural property tax rates could be significant, depending on how the amendment is implemented.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT... Page 8

Sharing agriculture with Wyoming consumers

BY KERIN CLARK

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) 11th annual "Wyoming Needs Agriculture" event on Sept. 14 gave Cowboy fans of all ages the opportunity to interact with farmers and ranchers and learn more about agriculture. The event was held during pre-game festivities of the University of Wyoming football game.

The first 400 fans to participate received a Wyoming Cowboys/Wyoming Needs Agriculture t-shirt. Even after the t-shirts were all distributed, fans kept coming into the WyFB area to rope, play the Family Feud-Ag Quiz Bowl and take pictures. Roping the dummy quickly became an event favorite.

SHARING AGRICULTURE... Page 7



Conversation and a photo with a farmer and a rancher. A great way to start conversations about agriculture during the Wyoming Needs Agriculture event. WyFB President and Laramie County Farmer Todd Fornstrom (left) and Carbon County Rancher Kyle Berger visited with cowboy fans of all ages sharing agriculture's message. *TAYLEN MOLLETT PHOTO.*

Ballot Text of Proposed Constitutional Amendment for General Election

2024 PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

A. The adoption of this amendment would separate residential real property into its own class of property for purposes of property tax assessments. The amendment would authorize the legislature to create a subclass of owner occupied primary residences.

- FOR
- AGAINST

Source: Wyoming Voter's Guide from Wyoming Secretary of State's Office

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www.wyfb.org



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- October**
- 4 Natrona County Farm & Ranch Bureau Annual Banquet at 5:30 p.m. - The Hangar Bar & Grill in Bar Nunn
 - 5 Northwest District Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 10 a.m.-4 p.m.-Hot Springs County Library in Thermopolis
 - 7 Southwest District Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 10 a.m.-Kemmerer
 - 8 Southeast District Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 10 a.m.—Currie's in Pine Bluffs
- November**
- 5 General Election
 - 7 WyFB Foundation Workshop/ Harvest for All Volunteer Event
 - 7-9 WyFB 105th Annual Meeting-Ramkota Hotel in Casper
- January 2025**
- 16-18 WyFB Young Farmer & Rancher Conference-Cody
 - 24-29 American Farm Bureau Convention-San Antonio, Texas
- March 2025**
- 7-10 AFBF YF&R/Fusion Conference-Denver, Colorado

Visit wyfb.org for event updates

NOTICE

Annual Policyholders' Meeting
 December 5, 2024 – 8:00 a.m.
 Mountain West Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company
 Farm Bureau Center, 931 Boulder Drive
 Laramie, Wyoming 82070

WYOMING FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

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MISSION: To represent the voices of Wyoming farmers and ranchers through grassroots policy development while focusing on protecting private property rights, strengthening agriculture, and supporting farm and ranch families through advocacy, education, and leadership development.

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What's EPA hiding in its clean water regulations?

Zippy Duvall

American Farm Bureau Federation President



In my family, as I'm sure for many of you, fall means harvest season and football season. Where I'm from, you can't help but be a Georgia Bulldog fan. No matter who you root for, though, you want a fair game where each team has the opportunity to win.

But, imagine for a moment what would happen if your team was expected to take the field without being given the rules. And it doesn't stop there: the referees wouldn't share that important information even when the coaches and players ask. The chances of your team winning under those circumstances would be near impossible.

Of course, this idea seems absurd, because it is. But this is exactly what farmers and ranchers are facing every day with the Waters of the United States rule implementation guidelines. Let me explain.

EPA Hiding the Playbook on Clean Water Regulations

In 2023, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled in *Sackett v. EPA* that the current administration overstepped its bounds in its WOTUS rule, specifically in the use of the "significant nexus test" which determines whether waterways can be federally regulated.

The Supreme Court ruled the government must follow the "relatively permanent" test. As the name suggests, only waterways that flow for most of the year and

are connected to traditional interstate navigable waters can be regulated. The WOTUS rule was revised, and the latest rule went into effect in September 2023. Instead of providing clarity for clean water, however, farmers and ranchers were subjected to an even more vague and confusing rule. Ignoring the intent of the Supreme Court ruling, EPA expanded its definition of relatively permanent, incorrectly putting even more waterways under federal jurisdiction.

Adding to the confusion, EPA has never shared new implementation guidelines with farmers. That means farmers and ranchers are expected to follow the rules without actually knowing what the rules are. This has created an endless guessing game when it comes to following clean water regulations. And, if you do unknowingly break the law, you face a fine of up to \$64,000 per day and possible jailtime.

All of this has created long delays in approved jurisdictional determinations (AJD), which are required before land improvements can move forward. An AJD is also required before a home can be built, or roads can be expanded. One year after the latest WOTUS rule, many applications have yet to be processed.

Farmers Need Clear Rules for a Clean Water Win

Every time we ask for clear guidelines, we are met with more vague answers. It

became so bad that the Waters Advocacy Coalition, which Farm Bureau is a member of, filed a Freedom of Information Act request to get access to the government's official implementation guidelines. What we received was more than a thousand pages of documents, with almost all of the pertinent information blacked out. Page after page of redacted information. This isn't transparency, and it only sets up America's farmers and ranchers to fail.

Let me be clear, America's farmers are dedicated to doing the right thing by protecting the natural resources they've been entrusted with and keeping our water clean. Our farms aren't just another workplace for us. We live on the land we farm, and we raise our families on this land. We can't be expected to play by the rules, though, when the federal government refuses to let us know what those rules are.

So now we're left with a question – why is EPA hiding the critical information farmers need to ensure they are in compliance with the latest WOTUS rule? Finding an answer to that is just as impossible as finding WOTUS implementation guidelines. America's job creators, including farmers, small businesses, and road and homebuilders all remain in the dark. Our government can do better. It must do better to ensure we can continue to keep our food supply strong while protecting our natural resources. ■

You can't have your cake and eat it too

Ken Hamilton

Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Executive Vice President



ORIGINALLY PRINTED IN THE FEBRUARY 2008 ISSUE OF WYOMING AGRICULTURE

Editor's Note: As Ken nears retirement we are taking a look back at past columns he has penned for Wyoming Agriculture. At the request of United States Senator John Barrasso, this article was printed in the United States of America Congressional Record on May 21, 2008.

One of the first little sayings you probably heard when you were growing up was that you can't have your cake and eat it too. Generally, everyone will agree that this is self-evident, but that doesn't stop Americans (and probably people in other countries) from always trying to have it both ways.

This is never more evident than the actions surrounding global warming. We are continually being bombarded by pronouncements about man caused global warming (it's hovering around 4 degrees with a 25 mph breeze blowing as I write this). When I was discussing this global warming issue with a friend, he said what people need to do is stop arguing with

activists over whether there is man caused global warming and start asking them what their solutions are going to be.

The more I thought about it the more I realized that the whole global warming debate is absent any discussion of real solutions. We hear vague pronouncements about a greenhouse gas tax, but not much else. And none have enough details to fully analyze what the impact will be on people. There are numerous shows on television where people are talking about reducing their "carbon footprint", but most of these solutions revolve around still living the lifestyle you want while feeling good about using a material someone has pronounced as "green".

For instance, one of the new "green" materials for flooring in houses is bamboo. Why someone feels this is greener than oak or pine is beyond me, but nevertheless apparently it is. The interesting thing is that while everyone is talking green, they are busy building a house that's twice the square footage of a generation ago. Our grandparents lived in a house where one or two rooms had heat part of the time.

In today's modern homes there is heat running to every room, plus a television set in half of them, a minimum two car garage (heated of course) and appliances that grandma couldn't even dream about. All of these, of course, have some "green" marketing gimmick attached to them, so, you guessed it, people can live in even bigger houses while feeling good about doing their part.

But if meaningful curbs in the greenhouse gases must occur as they profess, then there shouldn't be houses with two-car garages. You don't find those sorts of things in third world countries where the people's carbon footprint is less than here. Dishwashers must go as well as washing machines, dryers, and central heating. In third world countries where they don't have such a big carbon footprint, health clubs are not needed, nor are double ovens.

Arnold Schwarzenegger, who is in a panic over global warming, should stop driving around in his Humvee. In fact, to adequately address this issue, he should stop driving period.

CAN'T HAVE YOUR CAKE... Page 3

Legislative Interim Updates

BY BRETT MOLINE

The Legislative Interim Joint Agriculture Committee met in Buffalo Sept. 10 and 11. Two important topics with potential future legislation were discussed, temporary change in use of water and eminent domain for utility collector lines.

Currently law allows the temporary change in use of water for up to two-year terms, with no limit on how many times a temporary change in use can be renewed. Before granting the change in use, the state engineer will make sure no other water user on the affected water system would be harmed.

The current draft of the proposed legislation would change the time frame from two years to up to five years. The proposal would also limit the temporary change to a maximum of ten years. The draft originally outlined the state engineer would need to assure only senior rights would not be negatively affected. The draft was then amended to instruct the state engineer to assure no other appropriator was harmed. This bill will be further discussed at the Committee's November meeting.

The Committee also worked on a bill which would limit the use of eminent domain for collector lines for utilities. This proposed legisla-

tion calls for 85% of landowners or 85% of the land affected by the collector lines to be under an agreement before the company would be allowed to use eminent domain. The draft legislation also outlines the entity using eminent domain would have to pay at least the market value of the land condemned or the amount the property was devalued. The draft also outlines that terms of the negotiated easement would have to be disclosed should eminent domain be used. Discussion on the draft legislation included the points that terms should not have to be disclosed publicly and should remain confidential. The value paid to the condemned land was also discussed asking if the value high enough. This bill will also be further discussed at the November meeting.

Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation's stance on these bills will be based on WyFB policy so will depend on the final version of the bills.

The Predator Working Group discussed a bill which would establish that should a person run over a predator, that person would need to kill that predator as soon as possible. The draft legislation would put the proposed law in the animal abuse laws. The draft does not make using snowmobiles for predator control illegal. ■

National news updates

BY KELLY CARPENTER

Rock Springs Resource Management Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was released Aug. 22. The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) will submit comments within the 30-day protest period. A government consistency review is currently occurring which has a 60-day period. This timeframe is when the federal plan and the governor, primarily through local land use planning mechanisms that are on the books, attempt to reconcile any differences between the local and federal documents.

The Final Western Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was released mid-September. WyFB will provide comments within the 30-day protest period. Concerns with the final plan remain with private property rights regarding their proposed plan to site within certain disturbed areas and proximity to transmission lines. There will likely be an

increase in transmission lines and associated infrastructure as more green energy development occurs.

Old Growth Amendments EIS comment period is currently open. The United States Forest Service (USFS) is proposing to streamline forest plans surrounding old growth forest characteristics as a part of the Executive Orders from the Biden Administration focusing on climate change resilience. Concerns lie within homogenizing management across the country when it's clear each forest has different management goals and needs. WyFB will submit comments.

At the end of August, WyFB submitted comments on the Pathways National Heritage Area Feasibility Study that proposes to turn all of Natrona and Carbon Counties into a National Heritage Area. The National Park Service has an advisory role for these designations, but the largest concern is with private property rights and lack of law enforcement for trespassing. ■

CAN'T HAVE YOUR CAKE... From Page 2

But we don't see any of this happening and probably won't in the future. The people worried about global warming are still driving to work every day. They come home to heated and air-conditioned homes, turn on their 42-inch flat panel

television while getting their meal delivered by a college freshman in a fuel-efficient ¾-ton four wheel drive vehicle so they don't have to crank up one of those double ovens and hear the latest news about climate change. Recently a weather event caused a power outage in Arnold's state and not once did I hear him

say, "thank goodness, now we can start to do something meaningful about man caused global warming."

Politicians and proponents of global warming only want to personally do something about global warming if it doesn't mean a cold house in the winter or a hot one in the summer. Health clubs will still be

needed because people won't walk to work and will need to get some exercise somewhere. And pine forests will grow old, die and burn while folks feel good about their bamboo floor. Thinking all along that they are getting their cake and eating it too. ■

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Wyoming Ranch Camp 2024

BY SETH ALLEN, WYFB YF&R COMMITTEE MEMBER

I attended the Wyoming Ranch Camp at the Padlock Ranch in Ranchester, Wyoming, this summer. This is a great program put on by the University of Wyoming extension educators. This program gives new prospects for those in the agricultural industry or those looking to get started. The Wyoming Ranch Camp is a week-long program mixing hands-on learning with practical lessons. Each day entailed a new topic of discussion in ranch economics, soils, and livestock.

The program brought together 15 individuals from across the state, Utah, and Switzerland. Each participant came from a completely different background, which made it a great group to interact with. Many of the participants were attending college, either at UW or Snow College. Several had already started their professional careers; some were here for research. This program brought open discussions and new perspectives to consider.

Over the week, we discussed many topics on diversification, economics, and ecology. We also learned how to utilize different programs to help farmers, ranchers, or range managers make decisions. Some of these online programs (Ranch Tools) include the partial budget, Break-even budget, stocking tool, and market comparison. Somebody can find all these programs at <https://uwyoextension.org/ranchtools/>. Each program has a general description, and some have examples of videos. Utilizing the tools is meant to help take the emotions out of management decisions. At the beginning of the week, we were sorted into groups to create a management plan and present to a padlock manager and an extension educator.

The ranch management plan each group presented had to be attainable, descriptive, and mission-driven. The plan showed various online management tools to help support management decisions. The team that put forth the best management plan for the Padlock attained a scholarship. The process



Seth Allen



Wyoming Ranch Camp 2024 Participants. Seth Allen is second from right.

of putting together a management plan helped us practice using the ranch tools.

The Padlock Ranch is a premier ranch, and I enjoyed seeing it. The week started with branding one of their herd units. For some participants, it wasn't anything new; for the Swedish visitors, it was illegal. It was more fun hearing them talk about the processes they have to go through compared to how we operate here in the United States. The freedoms we take for granted. As I understood, they would have to have a veterinarian perform all vaccinations, castration, ear tagging, etc. Interesting fact: they never use iron brands on livestock. For animal identification, they use ear tags.

Besides the Padlock, we were invited to a premier sheep operation in Buffalo, Wyoming. The family was welcoming and open to sharing their operation and struggles. They also discussed some challenges their industry faces and their hope for the future. After we

had finished docking, one of the lessors shared some history on the Johnson County range war. It was a pretty exciting rendition of events. I enjoyed hearing about Wyoming's history.

The Wyoming Ranch Camp is a great option for people to continue their education and gain some tools to navigate the dynamic agriculture industry. I think it's important to continue learning, and I hope to attend a ranching for profit course sometime. Through Wyoming Ranch Camp, I gained knowledge and networked. The Wyoming Ranch Camp is for anyone and everyone to apply to. I would highly recommend considering attending.

Seth Allen represents the Southeast District on the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmer & Rancher Committee. Allen ranches for Jack Pfister Ranch in Niobrara County.

Regular YF&R Discussion Meet competition in November

Farm Bureau Federation members between the ages of 18-35 are invited to participate in the 2024 WyFB YF&R Discussion Meet competition. The competition will be held during the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) Annual Meeting in Cheyenne in November. The state winner receives a \$500 cash prize and an expense paid trip to the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) An-

nual Meeting in January 2025 in San Antonio, Texas.

Being an advocate for agriculture is important and should be a part of everyone's business plan. Develop your leadership and advocacy skills and meet other young farmers and ranchers from around the state and around the nation by participating in the YF&R Discussion Meet competition.

Collegiate YF&R Discussion Meet - January 2025

The competition will be Jan. 16-17 in Cody, Wyo. during the WyFB YF&R Conference. Any Wyoming college student with an interest in agriculture is eligible to participate. A major in agriculture is not required for competition. The state winner receives a \$1,000 cash prize and an expense paid trip to the AFBF national com-

petition March 2025 in Denver, Colo. to compete for college scholarships. Save the date!

More information

Topics and rules are available at wyfb.org. Regular Discussion Meet applications must be postmarked by Oct. 9, 2024. Contact WyFB YF&R Coordinator Kerin Clark at 307-534-6175 or kclark@wyfb.org with questions. ■

YOUNG FARMER & RANCHER CONFERENCE



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YF&R Discussion Meet Questions

1. Young farmers and ranchers are finding they need to diversify their farm portfolio. What are some ways that young farmers and ranchers can utilize diversification to explore new revenue sources? How can Farm Bureau support YF&R members as they strengthen their farm and ranch businesses?

2. Increases in the price of agricultural land make access and ownership of land one of the biggest hurdles for young farmers and ranchers looking to start or expand farms and ranches. How can young farmers and ranchers position themselves to react to competition for agricultural land?

3. The landscape of American agriculture and the picture of the "typical" American farm continues to change. Meanwhile, Farm Bureau will need to continue to recruit and retain members in order to be a vibrant and effective organization into the future. How can Farm Bureau continue to provide value and opportunity to welcome members

from across the broad diversity of modern agriculture and American farmers and ranchers?

4. Succession planning is often a tough subject not only for individual farms and ranches but also within county Farm Bureaus. Some younger members may find it challenging to become involved in their county Farm Bureau beyond the YF&R committee. What are some ways that county Farm Bureaus can encourage involvement from young members and how can actively engaged young board members help their county Farm Bureaus plan for the future?

5. Farmers and ranchers are reliant on multiple energy sources to run equipment, heat livestock barns and power storage and maintenance facilities. How can Farm Bureau work with energy companies, local governments and rural communities to increase domestic energy production, minimize loss of agricultural land and protect private property rights?

Sheridan College forms a Collegiate Farm Bureau

BY KERIN CLARK

A new Collegiate Farm Bureau has been established at Sheridan College. Sheridan College instructor/advisor Angel Sparkman and students Brand Terrell and Becca Nutting led the charge to start the chapter this fall.

The initial meeting garnered the involvement of 16 students and excitement for future opportunities. The Sheridan Coun-

ty Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation along with the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation were on hand to meet and speak with the students about agricultural involvement and opportunities.

Nutting accentuated the importance of broadening agriculture knowledge with one another and learning as young farmers and ranchers. "We as farmers and ranchers can only become more effective



WyFB President Todd Fornstrom (right) speaks to attendees at the September 12 informational meeting to form the Sheridan College Collegiate Farm Bureau Chapter. At his left, are founding members and Sheridan College students Brand Terrell and Becca Nutting. KERIN CLARK PHOTO.



Sheridan College students Brand Terrell (left) and Becca Nutting (right) with Advisor Angel Sparkman at the Sheridan County Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting.

by broadening our knowledge in this industry with one another," Nutting emphasized. "We have to become comfortable doing uncomfortable things, and ultimately talking about our productions with other producers is just that."

Sparkman is an advocate for co-curricular activities such as the WyFB Collegiate Discussion Meet. She has been bringing students to the state competition for several years. In February 2024, the Collegiate Discussion Meet competition was moved to the state YF&R Conference so Sparkman and her students were able to attend and learn more about the organization. As the winner of the state competition, Sheri-

dan College student Becca Nutting and Sparkman traveled to the American Farm Bureau Federation YF&R Conference where they were able to learn more and see the opportunities available through Collegiate Farm Bureaus.

Nutting and fellow student and competitor Brand Terrell are passionate about starting the college chapter to provide opportunities for more Sheridan College students to grow in their agricultural journeys.

"My whole motivation to start a Collegiate Farm Bureau has truly been the mentors and leaders ahead of me," Nutting said. "If I were to look back on the last year of my life and be told that I would have the opportunity to broaden

my knowledge and compete at the National Collegiate level I would say you were crazy! Yet this has truly been a blessing."

"Mentors like Angel Sparkman, Kerin Clark and the YF&R committee have pushed me to succeed in ways that I never thought possible," Nutting continued. "Going forward I want to be able to push our young farmers and ranchers to these greater extents, just as my leaders have and will continue to do so. We NEED leaders in this industry, young and old!"

Sheridan College students can learn how to get involved by contacting Sparkman at the campus or email asparkman@sheridan.edu. ■

GATHER AT THE TABLE... From Page 1

Following the workshop, participants will shift to a service project at the Food Bank of Wyoming where we will pack food boxes as part of the WyFB YF&R "Harvest for All" project.

The workshop and service project are free and open to the public. Attendees are requested to register by emailing bsettlemeyer@wyfb.org.

Meeting schedule snapshot

The annual meeting begins Thursday, Nov. 7 at noon with a luncheon. WyFB's four standing committees will meet Thursday afternoon to discuss resolutions pertaining to their areas and make recommendations. The committees are: Natural and Environmental Resources (NER), State Government Affairs (SGA), Agriculture Tax and General Issues. The committees consist of one representative per county (county committee chairs), the state chair and state vice-chair.

Ken Hamilton Retirement Celebration

A meet and greet social to celebrate Ken Hamilton's retirement will be Thursday, Nov. 7 from 4:15 to 6 p.m. Ken began his career with the organization in 1983. He was named the executive vice presi-

dent in 2004. After celebrating his 41st work anniversary on Oct. 3, Ken will officially retire on Oct. 31, 2024. All are invited to attend. If you would like to send a message/letter/card for Ken please email your message to dbrewer1@wyfb.org or mail to WyFB, Attn: Dee Brewer, PO Box 1348, Laramie, WY 82073.

Trivia Night

Members can gather around the tables at Gruner Brothers Brewing on Thursday, Nov. 7 at 7 p.m. for a fun Trivia Night experience. Northern Ag Network's Andy Schwab will entertain and lead the trivia game. This event is open to the public.

Annual Meeting

We will begin the day on Friday, Nov. 8 with a county president's and vice president's meeting. The general and business sessions of the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation will begin at 8:30 a.m. Members will hear reports from the WyFB president and the executive vice president. Voting delegates will begin discussing the resolutions and determining what is in the best interest of farmers and ranchers.

Two guest speakers from the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) will address the membership. AFBF staff members Terri Moore and Shelby Hagenauer will join the meeting and speak on com-

munication engagement and national agriculture issues. Moore is the AFBF Vice President of Communications. Hagenauer is an AFBF Senior Director of Government Affairs who focuses on western issues.

After a day of business work, Friday evening's banquet is a time to celebrate our farmers and ranchers. The Distinguished Service and Farm Bureau Leadership Awards will be presented. The evening will conclude with music entertainment by Davis and Mavrick.

Saturday, Nov. 9 will include resolutions consideration, elections, and a WyFB YF&R report.

Foundation Auction

The WyFB Foundation will hold the third annual silent and live auction at the awards banquet on Friday, Nov. 8. All proceeds from the auction will go to the Foundation.

"Harvest for All" Fundraiser

The WyFB Young Farmer & Rancher (YF&R) 21st annual "Harvest for All" fund drive will take place at annual meeting. Monetary donations (we are unable to accept food donations) will benefit the Food Bank of Wyoming. Please bring your monetary donations to the registration desk at annual meeting. Additionally, the WyFB YF&R Committee will hold their

annual playing card raffle so plan to buy your playing card raffle chances from any WyFB YF&R Committee member during annual meeting.

Hotel Reservations-Oct. 6 deadline

A room block has been secured at the Ramkota Hotel & Conference Center. To make a reservation, call the Ramkota Hotel & Conference Center at 307.266.6000 and refer to the "Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation." Reservations must be made online or by phone by Oct. 6 to be eligible for our group discount rate of \$91/night. The group rate is not available through the chain national toll-free numbers.

Registration

Pre-registration forms are requested by October 25. Please email Brooke Settlemeyer at bsettlemeyer@wyfb.org or call 307-721-7723 to register for the meeting. You may also contact your county Farm Bureau Federation president to learn more about attending the state annual meeting.

The meeting agenda will be printed in the November issue of *Wyoming Agriculture*. The agenda will also be available as the meeting gets closer at www.wyfb.org. ■

WyFB welcomes intern Ella Lezza

BY KERIN CLARK

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) welcomes Ella Lezza as an intern. Lezza is a third-year student at the University of Wyoming (UW) studying agricultural business. From Naperville, Illinois, Lezza began her internship in July 2024.

Lezza expressed appreciation for the opportunity to learn through this internship. "I enjoy learning new skills, expanding my network, meeting new people, and being able to work in an industry I love," she said. "So far I have learned so much from this internship and I am so appreciative to all the people that help push me and give me their patience to benefit my learning."

A love of working with animals led her to seek a career in agriculture. She notes certain events and people have guided her along the way. "A big moment was when my dad and I rehabilitated raccoons and I realized how much I enjoyed researching, helping animals, and this pushed me to take agriculture classes in high school. I took just about every agriculture class that my high school offered and enjoyed the cattle and equine sciences."

"I originally came to UW to study Animal Science with the intentions to either work cattle care on ranches or further my education as a veterinarian," she contin-



Ella Lezza

ued. "I decided that I enjoyed the business side of the cattle industry over the science portion which is why I eventually switched my major."

Lezza's parents are Jim and Kelly Lezza from Naperville, Illinois and she has two younger brothers.

At UW, Lezza is a member of the Wyoming Collegiate Cattle Association and she recently joined the Collegiate Farm Bureau. Lezza loves to cook, go to concerts, ride dirt bikes, make jewelry and spend time outside. ■

WyFB welcomes intern Lilly Stewart

BY KERIN CLARK

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) welcomes Lilly Stewart as an intern. Stewart is a sophomore at the University of Wyoming studying agribusiness with a concentration in agribusiness management. From Falcon, Colorado, Stewart began her internship on Sept. 9, 2024.

Stewart expressed she is grateful for this internship opportunity to allow her to dip her toes into the industry and career in which she aspires to work. Her future goals involve working in public relations and communications about and for American Agriculture. "I am looking forward to learning about the policy development that takes place at the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation, how to be a better advocate for agriculture to the general public and how to create eye catching marketing materials," Stewart said.

Life events and many people led Stewart to seek a career in agriculture. "My paw (an oil man from Texas) instilled in me from a young age that American agriculture needs good people with strong voices to educate the public about what we do and why we do it. Without agriculture we would all be hungry, naked, and cold," Stewart said. "The other person behind my inspiration was my high school FFA advisor, Mr. Kranz. He gave me many opportunities to explore the different niches in agriculture and pushed me to complete career goals that I had set for myself."



Lilly Stewart

Stewart comes from a military family. "My mom served just over 21 years in the US Airforce and my dad spent most of his career as a middle school principal," Stewart said. "I have a younger brother and sister. My brother loves to work on old cars and my sister loves to do digital animation."

At UW, Stewart is a member of the Collegiate Farm Bureau and the Gala Chairman for the Wyoming Collegiate Cattle Association. She attended the 2024 WyFB YF&R Conference and found it to be a phenomenal experience.

Stewart finished high school early and immediately took an intern position as an Operations and Events Specialist with the Catalyst Campus for Technology and Innovation. Stewart loves fly fishing, reining horses and all things food and nutrition. ■

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Protecting domestic agriculture through trade policy

BY DAVID SALMONSEN AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION SENIOR DIRECTOR, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Farm Bureau supports a positive and proactive U.S. trade policy that benefits our agricultural producers. But rising trade challenges and a \$30 billion agricultural trade deficit threaten the livelihoods of American farmers and ranchers who depend on growing trade flows and rules-based trade actions.

Now is the time for the administration and Congress to act on a U.S. trade policy that includes commercially meaningful negotiations on two-way trade with U.S. allies and partners. These negotiations should address shared interests in the cross-border exchange of food and agricultural products.

It's also important that the administration and Congress recognize that the negotiation of preferential trade agreements with U.S. allies and partners will help create economic opportunity for farmers and ranchers by improving access to trade and open markets. Agreements will also facilitate rules-based trade and focus enforcement against riskier trade.

Despite the clear benefits of past trade agreements, negotiations have stalled in recent years while other countries con-



AFBF PHOTO, MIKE TOMKO

tinue to establish the global "rules of the road" without U.S. participation.

Notably, China is stepping up efforts to negotiate new and update existing free trade agreements, including with some of America's closest allies and partners. It is critical for the United States to get back to the work of strengthening trade with our allies and partners.

U.S. trade policy must ensure that U.S. farmers can compete on an even playing field in export and import markets. This will require negotiating new agreements that open foreign markets to U.S. exports, promote international standards and support trade compliance by trading partners. Existing trade rules must also be enforced.



WNA volunteers.jpg: Farmers and ranchers, UW Collegiate Farm Bureau members and WyFB staff members combined forces to produce the Wyoming Needs Agriculture event on September 14. Front row: Bryndal Berger, Carbon County. Middle Row (l to r): Emma Hamlin, UW Collegiate Farm Bureau; Aida Hester, UW Collegiate Farm Bureau; Jordan Anderson, UW Collegiate Farm Bureau; Dee Brewer, WyFB; Bayla Berger, Carbon County; Brooke Settlemeyer, WyFB; Kelly Carpenter, WyFB. Back row (l to r): Todd and Laura Fornstrom, WyFB President/Laramie County; Sydnie Fornstrom, Laramie County; Shawn and Taylen Mollett, Laramie County; Ken Hamilton, WyFB; Kerin and Jake Clark, WyFB/Albany County; and Kyle Berger, Carbon County. Not pictured: Stacy Berger, Carbon County; Todd and Collette Christensen, Albany County. RAENELL TAYLOR PHOTO.



Bayla Berger shared some ranch roping tips with Cowboy fans at the roping station. TAYLEN MOLLETT PHOTO.

SHARING AGRICULTURE... From Page 1

Fans could play the “Ag Quiz Bowl” against each other in a “Family Feud” style of questions about agriculture. Fans lined up at the table with buzzers and all would buzz in to give their top answer.

The photo frame opportunity completed the event by providing fans a chance to visit one-on-one with Laramie County Farmer and WyFB President Todd Fornstrom and Carbon County Rancher Kyle Berger.

Sharing the “Wyoming Needs Agriculture” message continued during the University of Wyoming (UW) football game with the scoreboard video at the beginning of halftime. Goshen County Ranchers Skyler and Makenna Miller had a conversation with UW Athletics Broadcasters Keith Kelley and Kevin McKinney to share agriculture’s message with an even larger audience. Skyler is a former UW football player.

Farmers and ranchers, UW Collegiate Farm Bureau members and WyFB staff members combined forces to produce this great event. ■

Editor’s Note: To view the video and more pictures from the event, visit www.wyfb.org. Click on these tabs: Get Involved/Education/Wyoming Needs Agriculture.



The survey says...game show host Shawn Mollett entertained and advocated as Cowboy fans played Family Feud-Wyoming Agriculture style. TAYLEN MOLLETT PHOTO.



UW Collegiate Farm Bureau Member Aida Hester helps this young Cowboy fan learn about ranching and roping. TAYLEN MOLLETT PHOTO.

Cooking with the Modern Ranch Wife

Breakfast Pinwheels

Recipe by Connie Werner

Ingredients

- 2 cans original Pillsbury crescent rolls
- 1 lb breakfast sausage
- shredded cheddar cheese

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°. Spray a cookie sheet with nonstick spray.
2. On a flat surface open one can of the crescent rolls. Pinch seams together to make one large sheet.
3. Taking small bits of sausage at a time, spread the sausage onto the dough, using 1/2 the sausage for each can of dough.
4. Sprinkle evenly with cheddar cheese.
5. Begin with the long sides, roll the dough up like you would for cinnamon rolls. Pinch the open edge to the roll to seal. Pinch together any seams that may have opened with rolling.
6. Cut into 3/4- 1” slices and transfer to the cookie sheet. Place them about 1-2 inches apart. Repeat with the remaining crescent roll can, sausage, and cheese. Bake until golden brown and sausage is done about 12-15 minutes.



These are very versatile and work well with cooked bacon, scrambled eggs, green chiles and any favorite breakfast item. They freeze well and are great for on the go mornings.

For more recipes visit www.modernranchwife.com

PROPOSED AMMENDMENT... From Page 1

"It's not an unreasonable conclusion that ag rates could see increases as a result of this proposed initiative," Reiman explained. "The separation of agricultural land from residential property could create pressure on agricultural and commercial properties if residential tax rates are reduced."

Reiman noted that while the initial impact might be felt primarily by residential property owners, changes in one area of taxation could have a ripple effect. "There could be long-term pressure on ag and commercial properties, but we have no way of knowing how that shakes out unless the amendment is passed and the legislature acts on it" he said.

"Commercial property tax rates in Wyoming are currently among the lowest in the country," he explained, "But, if the government needs more revenue, they could look to those sectors in the future."

Henson stressed that the full impact of the amendment will not be clear until the legislature meets in its next session.

"The constitutional amendment simply creates a fourth residential tier with an additional provision that the legislature may create a subclass for owner-occupied residences," she said.

Henson outlined a potential scenario for how this could play out: A piece of land with both agricultural and residential structures could end up being taxed at different rates depending on how the legislature classifies the buildings.

"Property owners would need to identify residential structures that are owner-occupied to ensure the appropriate level of assessment is applied," Henson explained. This adds a layer of complexity to the current system, which could raise

concerns for farmers who manage both agricultural land and residential buildings on their properties."

Another concern Henson raised is the possibility of increased assessments on non-residential properties. "Some have voiced concern that the legislature may consider increasing the level of assessment on the 'all other property' tier to make up for the lower tax base that would be the result of the reductions on residential property," she said.

However, she also acknowledged that it's possible the new tier will have little impact if the legislature decides to keep the assessment rates the same.

Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Director of Public and Government Affairs Brett Moline echoed concerns about the complexity the new system could introduce. Moline said, "I'm a big believer in the KISS principle—keep it simple, silly. We've got that right now, and I think changing the number of classes is just going to complicate our tax system."

Moline, like Reiman, expressed concern about the financial implications for farmers and ranchers. "If the cost of government goes up, they're going to need more tax revenue. It'll be politically more difficult to raise taxes on residential property, so other classes like industrial, commercial, and agriculture will be at a higher risk."

Moline is particularly worried about the possibility that the legislature could decide to lower residential property tax rates while maintaining or even increasing the rates for agricultural land. "Given the government always needs more money, they could increase the rate on other properties like industrial, commercial, and agriculture. The potential shift in the tax burden from homeowners to other proper-

ty owners is a significant concern for those in the agriculture industry."

Dixie Huxtable is the Converse County Wyoming Assessor. Her main concern is rooted in the uncertainty of the amendment and potential complications for the process of assessing properties.

"Farmers and ranchers will be affected depending on how legislators move forward in the 2025 session. The proposed changes could complicate the assessment process for properties with both agricultural land and residential buildings, adding more administrative burden to county assessors."

From an assessor's standpoint, Huxtable pointed out that defining what qualifies as "residential real property" will be critical. She pointed out structures such as bunk houses and other dwellings on the ranch could be difficult to define.

"Just because voters pass it in November doesn't mean anything changes immediately," Huxtable said. "The legislature will still have to write bills and language to define what qualifies as residential."

Laurie Urbigit notes the Wyoming Realtors Association is a proponent of this amendment as it allows for legislatures to offer breaks for homeowners without giving breaks to other types of real estate that are currently lumped in with residential.

"If this passes, farmers and ranchers who live in houses, which I would imagine they all do, would receive the same tax break as anyone else based on their residential properties," Urbigit said. "It could change how homes are taxed, but agricultural land wouldn't be affected directly."

She added, "Some of these farmers have nice homes. Anytime we can do something to save money, it's a good day."

Urbigit noted that defining what qualifies as residential has been difficult. "We've

tried a lot of definitions, but it's really up to the assessor to decide what counts as residential versus agricultural land. Right now, it's being handled by the county assessor, and it varies."

"We support this amendment because we believe in solutions that help people stay in their homes," she said. "We can't give homeowners, like grandma, a break on their property taxes unless we offer the same to businesses. Big box stores are already paying very few taxes. Separating residential allows for us to make meaningful progress in keeping people in their homes."

For those involved in the mineral industry, the potential for a shrinking tax base and an increased burden on the mineral sector is a top concern.

Travis Deti of the Wyoming Mining Association noted, "Our concern is that it will lead to a further shrinking of the tax base and shift even more of the state's tax burden to the minerals industry, of which we are already over-reliant."


As voters gear up for this potential amendment, Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation President Todd Fornstrom stresses how important it is for voters to educate themselves prior to casting any votes.

"As a taxpayer, I believe it is important that we be aware that some groups will pay more in taxes to make up for any decrease in taxes for a specific class. That increase will have to come to make up for the lost revenue unless a decrease in spending is implemented," Fornstrom explained. "If more classes of properties are established, shifting the tax burden from category to category will become easier for future legislative bodies." ■

Editor's Note: Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation policy supports the three existing tiers written into the Wyoming Constitution.

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Gather at the table! Grassroots action at work!

The grassroots policy development starts with Farm Bureau Federation members gathering at the table at their county annual meetings. It's a tradition that is going on 105 years strong. Following county and district meetings, the policy development process at the state level culminates Nov. 7-9 at the WyFB Annual Meeting in Casper. Here's a look at just a few of the scenes from the tables across the state in September. ■



Goshen County
Goshen County Farm Bureau Federation Board Member Kody McClun leads the resolutions discussion at their annual meeting. Members gathered around the table to develop grassroots policy. At the table, they were treated to decor of fresh flowers grown by board member Tami Greenwald. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



Weston County
WyFB YF&R State Chair Tucker Hamilton gives a report as Weston County Farm Bureau Federation members gathered around the tables at their annual meeting to hear speakers and develop policy. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



Niobrara County
Chelsea Hunter was awarded the 2024 VIP Award from the Niobrara County Farm Bureau Federation (NCFBF) at their annual meeting in September. Hunter is a past NCFBF President and a past WyFB Young Farmer & Rancher State Chair. Hunter was recognized for her leadership at the county and state level through these positions. NCFBF President James Kruse (right) presented the award to Hunter. Kruse showcased multiple initiatives she established during her tenure including the Century Club member challenge that helped grow membership and the County YF&R Involvement program to recognize county YF&R involvement. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



Sheridan County
Sheridan College started a Collegiate Farm Bureau this September! Founding members and their advisor joined the Sheridan County Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation annual meeting. Left to right: Kerin Clark, WyFB; Becka Nutting, Sheridan College student; Angel Sparkman, Sheridan College Advisor; Brand Terrell, Sheridan College student; Todd Fornstrom, WyFB President; and Andy Edwards, Sheridan County Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation President.



Laramie County
WyFB President Todd Fornstrom (right) speaks at the Laramie County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting welcoming local FFA students. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



Lincoln County
A great meal and speakers at the Lincoln County Farm Bureau Federation annual meeting. Following the meeting, the county board and new county insurance agent thanked Ken Hamilton for his dedication to agriculture. Left to right: Kurtis Webber Jed Heap; Randy Humphreys; Hamilton; Stetson Nield; Trent Peterson; Agent Dallas Turnbow; and Nina Nield. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



Big Horn County
Big Horn County Farm Bureau Federation President Tim Beck presented a gift on behalf of Big Horn County to WyFB Executive Vice President Ken Hamilton at their annual meeting. The county thanked Hamilton, who was raised in Big Horn County, for his service to agriculture as he approaches his upcoming retirement. *BRETT MOLINE PHOTO.*

Wyoming Classifieds

ALL CLASSIFIED ADS must be received by the 10th of each month to appear in the next issue. Members may place two (2) complimentary ads, up to 40 words each, per issue. Real estate sales not included. Complimentary ads will run for three issues unless requested otherwise. Non-members may submit an ad at a minimum rate of \$5 per ad (50 cents per word). The appearance of any ad in *Wyoming Agriculture* does not constitute an endorsement or approval of the product or service offered.

TO SUBMIT ADS, send your ad along with your name, phone number and member number or member county to kclark@wyfb.org or mail to WyFB, ATTN: Classifieds, P.O. Box 1348, Laramie, WY 82073.

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New Members

ALBANY

Lisa Violet, Laramie; Sara Crane, Laramie; Steven Torok, Laramie; Catherine & Dennis Wick, Mountain View; Lori Brown, Laramie; Nancy Greene, Laramie; Matthew Lehning, Laramie; Tyler Hanson, Laramie; Benjamin Kern, Laramie

BIG HORN

Amanda McGrew, Greybull; Nanette Probst, Greybull; Jeff Jacobs, Greybull; Boyd Van Fleet (REG), Greybull; Joshua Paumer (REG), Lovell; Joshua Jameson, Lovell; Kimberly Hiday, Greybull; Erin & Joseph Bassett (REG), Burlington; Steven Watts, Shell; Brian Good (REG), Greybull; Virginia Dow, Greybull; Jeffery Brown, Basin; Diane Paul, Greybull

CAMPBELL

Allan Schaefer, Powell; Lois Newton/ Newton Family Farms (REG), Gillette; Nicole & Bob Hewitt-Gaffney, Gillette; Lynne Buckley, Rozet; Connie & Kevin Christianson, Moorcroft; Ann & Paul Phillips, Gillette

CARBON

Kari Tofte & Mathew Feller, Casper; Kenneth Thornton, Rawlins; Joy Hamilton, Saratoga; Trenton Turner, Cheyenne; Tabitha & Michael Farber, Saratoga; Angie Fivas, Hanna; Matt Leonard (REG), Medicine Bow; Aimee Gray, Laramie; William Armstrong, Hanna; Cindy Wilson, Saratoga; Jason Jones, Rawlins; Leigh Guardia, Rawlins; Joseph Hoover, Berlin, MD; Stephen Fritz, Rawlins

CONVERSE

Maggi Miller, Bar Nunn; Lacie & Ryan Lembke (REG), Lovell; Rebecca West, Glenrock; Craig Burns, Casper; Norman Albertson, Glenrock; Linda & Gerald Epperly, Glenrock; Jean Patterson, Douglas

CROOK

Sharon Humes, Moorcroft; Dee Mary & Rex Riley, Lusk; Cheryl & Mark Burgess, Sundance; Shanna & Guy Howell (REG), Belle Fourche, SD; Antonette Curren, Aladdin; LeRoy Curren (REG), Aladdin; Henry Redenbaugh, Sundance

FREMONT

Deryle Matland (REG), Lander; Alicia Aldrich, Lander; John Kidwell, Lander; Randall Christensen (REG), Shoshoni; Christine & Otto Uecker, Riverton; Reena & Justin Minard, Riverton; Shawn McRae, Lander; Donald Morrow (REG), Lander; Renee Lemley, Riverton; Bethany Baldes, Riverton; Daniel Partington, Kinnear; Margaret & Paul Morrison (REG), Hudson

GOSHEN

Mary Viktorin, Torrington; Donna & Tom Atwood, Torrington; Peggy Wagner/ Missel Ranch Partnership (REG), Choctaw, OK; Sidney & Ricky Posten, Torrington; Karen & Miles Daily (REG), Torrington; Sue & Steven Hays (REG), Meriden; Nathan Muilenburg, Torrington; Leesa Lee/ Raben Land Inc (REG), Green River; J & J Ochsner (REG), Lingle; Forest Foss, Guernsey; Shelby & Carson Wuredeman, Lusk; Shirley & Harry Trowbridge (REG), Lingle; Susan & Kevin Smith (REG), Torrington; Sean Graham, Torrington

HOT SPRINGS

Grant Fleming, Thermopolis; Carrie & Robert Ryan, Thermopolis; Cassie & Quinton Hetzel, Thermopolis; Korinne & Sean Ryan, Thermopolis; Teresa & Donald Fields, Thermopolis; Joan Kordonow & Jolan Maser Sikes, Thermopolis; Melody & Samuel Weiss, Thermopolis; Bruce Johnson, Thermopolis; Kelly & Brian Strampe, Thermopolis

JOHNSON

Mary & Dan Rhoads, Buffalo; Bobby Watts, Buffalo; Connie & Albert Rumfelt, Buffalo; Ronald Winchek, Buffalo; Ronda & Ron Groteluschen, Buffalo; Timber Buhr (REG), Clearmont; Lisa Douglas, Buffalo; Gerry Bishop (REG), Buffalo; Erik Burden, Buffalo; TTT Living Trust, Buffalo; William Woodward, Buffalo; Braiden Wadin, Buffalo; Kathy Bohne, Buffalo; Linda Webber, Buffalo

LARAMIE

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NEW MEMBERS... From Page 10

LARAMIE (CONTINUED)

Duane Dillow, Cheyenne; Susan Pomeroy, Cheyenne; Ben Jenkins, Cheyenne; Rhonda & John Mohlis, Cheyenne; Jennifer Manriquez, Cheyenne; Bridget Hill, Cheyenne; Alicia Brown, Cheyenne; Kalin Dibben, Cheyenne; Dawn Giachino, Cheyenne; Carmela & Tyler Graves, Pine Bluffs; Michelle & Craig Spatz (REG), Hillsdale; Chandler & Andrea Carroll, Cheyenne; Sabrina & William Ernst, Cheyenne

LINCOLN

Amy Hamilton, Alpine; Dana Henry, Star Valley; Joshua Kurtti, Alpine; Jerimiah Smial, Etna; Chance Warren, Afton; Jared Duckstein, Alpine; Jerry Syndergaard, Star Valley; Kevin Ortman, Star Valley; Tracy Sorenson, Afton; Torie Thornock, Grover; Scott McCue, Kemmerer; Jody Ball, Kemmerer; Ruthann Jensen, Afton; Verna Warren, Afton; Kaycee Balls, Afton; Dennis & Leslie Lancaster (REG), Smoot; Jeffery Greenwood, Afton

NATRONA

Kathy & Pablo Headworth, Casper; Karen Bishop, Casper; Ryan May, Casper; Justin Wentz (REG), Casper; Gretchen Ullery, Casper; Kim Cooper, Casper; Connie McMillan, Casper; Jamie Rohrer, Casper; Madelyn Betz, Casper; Rebecca Abramo, Casper; Sonja Baxter, Casper

PARK

Sherry Brunner, Powell; William Jacobs, Powell; Cassandra & Damon Riel, Powell; John Greensitt (REG), Cody; John Stein, Cody; Racheal Linberger, Cody; Judy & Gene Braten (REG), Powell; Sara & Luke Hopkin (REG), Cody; Zachary Coombs, Ralston; Allen Hatch (REG), Powell; Taylor Heart, Cody; Michelle & Jesse Fowler (REG), Powell; Michael Belliston, Powell; Celedina & Delfino Juarez (REG), Powell; Michelle Daniels, Powell; Misa Siemons, Powell; Karl Bear/ One Cornerstone LLC (REG), Powell; Melissa & Casey Brazelton, Powell

PLATTE

Linda Reitz/ Old Home LLC (REG), Wheatland; Kathleen Case, Wheatland

SHERIDAN

Jeriann & Arik Jacobson (REG), Sheridan; Mercedes Lonabaugh, Sheridan; James Ball, Sheridan; Christopher Radar, Sheridan; James Fuller, Sheridan; Margo Heck, Sheridan; Michael Odegard (REG), Arvada; Dellaina Cathcart, Sheridan; Alan Barnett (REG), Worland; Sarag & Jesse Holzemer, Story; Krysta Roush, Ranchester; Mary Flanagan, Dayton; Molly Mountain & Terry Eckard, Sheridan; Tressa & Wade Glaser, Banner; Lexie Culligan, Sheridan; Sharon Walters-Ritz, Sheridan; Anthony Nicholls, Sheridan; Carmen & Doug Rideout, Sheridan;

Gail Anderson, Parkman; Tonya Boyce, Sheridan; Richard Hebein, Sheridan; Shane Kinsel, Sheridan; Shiann & EJ Panetta, Sheridan; Irene Cross, Sheridan; Audrey & Rodney Brown, Sheridan; John Tucker, Sheridan; Darlene Reiter, Sheridan; Sarah & Michael Morton (REG), Big Horn; Fred Prunty, Sheridan; Betsy Edwards, Sheridan; Deborah Reed, Sheridan; Josh Barker, Ranchester; Ray Hamilton, Ranchester; Steven Tobi, Sheridan; Jennifer Gage, Sheridan; Joanne Brinkerhoff, Sheridan; Bette Hartman, Sheridan; Big Horn Cattleman's Association (REG), Decker, MT; Colter Carzoli, Banner; Cody Feedback, Ranchester; Ethan Chartier, Sheridan; Matthew Petty, Ranchester; Miriam Brewer, Sheridan; Kimberly Estep, Sheridan; Angel Sparkman (REG), Sheridan; Deb & Michael Ayars, Big Horn; Lauri & David Pfannenstiel, Dayton; Stormy & John Broad, Sheridan; Tyrell Marshall (REG), Dayton

SWEETWATER

Andrew Hill, Rock Springs; Tony & Dusty Medina, Green River; Traci & Tracie Soller, Rock Springs; Jenneifer Whitten, Green River; Scott Hansen, Rock Springs; Darlene Merrell, Rock Springs; Janell & John Flack, Rock Springs; Adele Bertagnolli, Rock Springs; Christine Butterfield, Green River; MH6, LLC (REG), Farson; Paula Knezovich, Superior; Ellen & Dan Hinesley, Rock Springs; Mary & Gary Brown, Rock Springs; Averi Lison, Rock Springs

TETON

Dave Fuchs, Alpine; Ann & Doug Mertaugh, Jackson; Jake Bearss, Etna; Karen Smith, Jackson; Steven Voorhees, Jackson; Kymberlee Everett, Jackson; Charlotte & Jonathan Souter, Jackson; Mackenzie Lauzon, Jackson; Janet Dunlop, Bondurant; Kim & Maura Harrower, Jackson

UINTA

Lori & Tim Perkins, Evanston; Jeremy Watts Evanston; James Nettles, Rock Springs; Garrick Prentice, Mountain View; Joseph Robinson, Lyman; Ryan Hansen, Mountain View; Jeremy Major, Lyman; Bethany & Cody Peacock, Lyman; Lacey 7 Monte Bernard, Mountain View; Virgil Peterson, Fort Bridger; Shannon Meeks, Mountain View; Ralph Mair, Mountain View

WASHAKIE

Aaron Stone, Worland; Gordon Johnson (REG), Worland; Marie & Gerald Molzahn, Worland; Cheryl & Jesse Folsom, Worland

WESTON

Peter McFarland, Newcastle; Mike McFarland, Newcastle

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Obituaries



Howard John Gernant

March 26, 1947 – August 31, 2024

Howard Gernant's long goodbye from Alzheimer's ended on August 31, 2024, in the family home with his family around him as he wished.

Howard was born on March 26th, 1947, to Otto and Doris Gernant of Emblem, Wyoming. He attended school in Emblem through the eighth grade and he graduated from Greybull High School in 1965. He attended Northwest College for two years and graduated from the University of Wyoming in August of 1969. He accepted a job teaching Ag in Kaycee, Wyoming where he started the ag chapter. It was while teaching there that he met and fell in love with the new Home Ec teacher. He and Carol were married on May 26th, 1974, in Emblem, Wyoming, and were blessed to have just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in May. Howard and Carol moved to Emblem where Howard farmed with his dad and brother for 21 years until health issues and circumstances forced him to quit. He then took over as the manager of the Big Horn County Fair - a job

he absolutely loved. He also worked as an activity bus driver for Greybull and Basin schools and as the bus barn manager until he retired in 2016.

Howard's great love in life was working with youth and helping them in any way he could whether it was on the farm, at the fairgrounds, while teaching, driving bus, or helping with 4-H or FFA events. Howard received the honorary chapter farmer degree from several local chapters, an honorary State FFA farmer degree, and an honorary American farmer degree. He also was named the Rocky Mountain Fair Association Fair Manager of the Year in 2008, an honor he was very proud of. Howard was a member of the State Fair Advisory Board, the swine superintendent at the Wyoming State Fair for 10 years, a member of the REA board, a member of the Grace and Zion Lutheran church councils, and longtime Lions club member.

Howard was preceded in death by his parents Otto and Doris Gernant, sister Kathy

Gernant, and his nephew Kevin Coash.

He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Carol of the family home. Three daughters whom he adored always - Carrie Gernant of Cheyenne, Wyoming, Sara (Shane) Howe of Buffalo, Wyoming, and Jenna (Rob) Evans of Peyton, Colorado. Five grandkids - Bailey, Sydney and Brinley Howe, and Madison and Conner Evans. One sister Fern McLaughlin of Tucson, Arizona and one brother DuWayne Gernant of Firestone, Colorado and numerous nieces and nephews and close cousins.

A graveside service for close friends and family at the Emblem Cemetery took place Sept. 7th, 2024, followed by a Celebration of Life reception everyone was encouraged to attend at the Big Horn County Fairgrounds in Basin, WY.

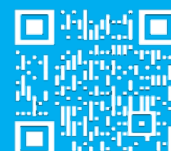
A memorial fund has been established in Howard's name at all Big Horn Federal locations, per Howard's request any memorial donations will go to the Big Horn County Fair to help with the completion of their hog barn. Condolences can be mailed to P.O. Box 295 Greybull, WY 82426. Funeral arrangements provided by Haskell Funeral Home. ■



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Ranchers and communities band together in the aftermath of wildfires

BY CALLIE HANSON
FOR WYOMING AGRICULTURE

Editor's Note: The impact of fires across Wyoming has been steep this year. This short story captures a glimpse from three people of the impact of fires across Wyoming. We know so many have been impacted and have a story to tell. The resounding theme through it all seems to be appreciation for life's blessings, friends, neighbors, and volunteer firefighters. The Campbell County Farm Bureau Federation worked to share information about relief efforts to ensure donations go to trusted sources in their area. They found the Wyoming Fire Relief Fund to be a great resource for those who wish to help.

This year, devastating wildfires swept through several regions, affecting countless ranchers and their livelihoods. Ranchers from across the state battled the blaze in an attempt to salvage their homes and livestock. In the true spirit of the cowboy state, communities banded together to support each other through these times.

Jim Coxbill, a Campbell County rancher and Farm Bureau member lost nearly 2,000 of his 2,500 acres of grass.

"Most of my pasture burned, around 2,000 acres out of my 2,500." While they were fortunate not to lose any buildings or livestock, Coxbill worries about the long-term impacts on his land. "A lot of the timber burned hot, leaving bare dirt. I'm really concerned about erosion and what will grow back."

Coxbill emphasized the importance of rain in the coming months. "A good soaker would be critical. If that doesn't happen, we're looking at a tough winter." He expressed his concern that even if some grass does regrow, it might not be enough to sustain his cattle next year.

The impact of the fire on the land was severe. "A lot of my country was cedar and timber, and there wasn't much grass under those trees," he explained. "What will come back? Weeds? We might need help with weed control." With the land left bare and vulnerable, he worries about erosion. "It's just a big pot of dust whenever the wind blows."



The aftermath of fire as seen through the lens of Sheridan County Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation President and rancher Andy Edwards. Edwards is among the many ranchers who spent days fighting fire and working to protect their livestock. ANDY EDWARDS PHOTO.



The Remington Fire alone burned nearly 200,000 acres in Northeastern Wyoming and into Montana. ANDY EDWARDS PHOTO.

In terms of support, Coxbill received hay donations through a combination of Farm Bureau and the Wyoming Fire Relief. "I think I got one load from the Farm Bureau, but the rest was through Wyoming Fire Relief. I really appreciate what I got."

Lane Hageman, affected by the Pleasant Valley Fire, noted they are not used to fires in the area and initially thought they were safe from the initial flare up.

"When the fire flared up, I had no idea it would reach us. I thought we were safe," he said. Hageman and his family, along with many neighbors, fought hard to protect their homes. "We barely saved all three of our houses. It was wild, but we were lucky," he reflected.

While Hageman mentioned the organized volunteer fire departments in the area, he noted that much of the initial firefighting effort came from neighbors. "It was ranchers with quick attack rigs who helped us save our houses," he explained.

The fire ultimately destroyed around 9,000 acres of grass and 23 miles of fencing. Hageman described the community's response: "Everyone rallied together. Friends drove in from all over to help."

With offers of relief coming from all directions, Campbell County rancher Amanda Geer took it upon herself to organize efforts to ensure no one would be donating to scams or other unrelated causes.

"So many people wanted to help. We congregated at a church to organize donations," she said. Geer, along with the Campbell County Cattlewomen and the

Farm Bureau, worked to ensure that donations went to trusted sources. "We teamed up to create a safe space for donations. The Wyoming Fire Relief Fund is a great resource for those looking to help broadly across the state," she added.

Geer noted that while many wanted to donate food and supplies, it became essential to manage these resources effectively. "We started making freezer meals for ranchers who were out fencing for 12 hours a day. If we could relieve them even for one night, it was worth it," she explained.

The community effort also addressed fencing needs, with some fundraising directed specifically toward that cause. "I know there are efforts to purchase fencing supplies at a low cost, which will be vital for recovery," Geer said.

As ranchers like Coxbill and Hageman face an uncertain future, the resilience of Wyoming ranchers cannot be overstated.

"We thought our fire was huge, but there are others dealing with fires that burned hundreds of thousands of acres," Hageman said. "We have to be grateful for what we have and stay close to home." ■

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Distinguished Service and Farm Bureau Federation Leadership Award nominations due Oct. 7, 2024

Nominations for the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Distinguished Service and Farm Bureau Leadership Awards are due in the state office no later than Oct. 7. These awards recognize those individuals/couples who have devoted much time to the betterment of agriculture in Wyoming and the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation.

Distinguished Service Award nominees must be active in the Farm Bureau Federation and/or other areas that relate directly to agricultural interests.

Farm Bureau Federation Leadership Award nominees must be an agricultural operator and active on a state-wide basis.

Award nominations may be made by any county Farm Bureau Federation. Please note:

- Only one nomination per award may be made by the county.

- Award judging done by the Administrative Advisory Committee of the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Board of Directors.
- The committee is not limited to considering only nominations from participating county Farm Bureau Federations but may make an independent selection.

The nomination award form is available at wyfb.org, click on the "Events" tab and then scroll to the award deadline link for Oct. 7.

The awards will be presented at the WyFB Annual Meeting on Nov. 8 during the evening banquet. Contact Dee Brewer at 307-721-7719 or dbrewer1@wyfb.org for more details. ■

Outstanding Membership Worker Award nominations due Oct. 7

Nominations for the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Outstanding Membership Worker Awards are due in the state office no later than Oct. 7. This award recognizes those hard workers in the state for their outstanding dedication and effort in recruiting Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation members. There are three categories:

1. Volunteer
2. Agent
3. County Office Staff

The nomination award form is available at wyfb.org, click on the "Events" tab and then scroll to the award deadline link for Oct. 7.

The awards will be presented at the WyFB Annual Meeting. Contact Dee Brewer at 307-721-7719 or dbrewer1@wyfb.org for more details. ■

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 In this interactive session, you'll explore the principles that attract members to volunteer opportunities and learn the tools you can use to help new volunteers stick with your organization for years to come.

9:30-11:30 AM "Feed the Need" with Harvest for All Service Project
 Join in on packing food boxes at the Food Bank of Wyoming as part of the WyFB "Harvest for All" project.

NOV 7 | 8:00-11:30 A.M. | RAMKOTA HOTEL & FOOD BANK OF WYOMING

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AG TRADE POLICY... From Page 6

With U.S. farmers and ranchers challenged by continuing low prices we believe it is urgent to leverage U.S. strengths in foreign markets to pursue new rules-based trade agreements.

Continual engagement with trade policy makers and trade partners helps maintain beneficial relationships and provides for new opportunities. That is why Farm Bureau meets with the trade-oriented committees and members in Congress, and with USDA and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, to inform them of priorities in adopting trade policies and actions that benefit farmers and ranchers.

Explaining the importance of trade with China has been a constant this year in order to maintain our export markets and forestall new trade barriers.

We have also been discussing the opportunities for agriculture in the 2026 review of the U.S. Canada-Mexico Agreement. Through these engagements with the Canadian and Mexican embassies and with U.S. officials, we share our concerns. Mexico's restrictions on biotech corn, and more broadly, the state of agricultural exports and imports in the North American marketplace, are top of mind.

AFBF President Duvall will travel to Mexico to speak at a Global Agri-Food Forum this


fall, hosted by the National Agricultural Council of Mexico. He will discuss a range of issues with our counterparts in Mexico and other countries, including market opportunities, food security, productivity, competitiveness and the United States' approach to agriculture sustainability.

AFBF has also engaged in many discussions with European officials and farm groups, including the Danish Agricultural Council, the National Farmers Union of England and the association of European Union agricultural groups, Copa-Cogeca, about how we are addressing the issues and methods of sustainable production. Another way we engage is by sharing with the joint "USDA-EU Collaboration on Sustainable Agriculture," the importance of voluntary, incentive-based sustainability programs that can benefit farmers and maintain productivity without distorting trade.

President Duvall met late September with a delegation of European Union officials in Washington, D.C., to discuss approaches to agricultural production, sustainability and trade.

These continuing efforts to improve market opportunities and protect our domestic agriculture industry are necessary to benefit farmers and ranchers.

David Salmonsens is a senior director of government affairs at the American Farm Bureau Federation. ■



Celebrating Ken Hamilton's Retirement
 from the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation




Ken began his career with WyFB in 1983. He was named the Executive Vice President in 2004 and will retire on October 31, 2024.

MEET & GREET WITH KEN

DATE: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7
 TIME: 4:15-6:15 PM
 LOCATION: RAMKOTA HOTEL IN CASPER, WY

AT THE 105th WYOMING FARM BUREAU FEDERATION ANNUAL MEETING

If you would like to send a message/letter/card for Ken please email your message to dbrewer1@wyfb.org or mail to WyFB, Attn: Dee Brewer, PO Box 1348, Laramie, WY 82073.



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