

ELF ON THE SHELF

READING FARMWEEK

Cut out the items below to dress your Elf on the Shelf for their Farm Bureau activities



FarmWeek PERSPECTIVES

Page 20 • Monday, November 20, 2013

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER: Charting Farm Bureau's future starts with hearing from you



MARK GEBHART
IAA, National Meeting in Chicago

The upcoming National Meeting in Chicago brings together the Farm Bureau family within and outside the business of our organization.

At this year's Annual Meeting, I'm looking forward to talking with many of you about our organization's Organizational Strategy (OS), one of the challenges I've taken on as my new role as Illinois Farm Bureau chief strategy officer. For just one of a group of people working on the OS to make sure we're positioned as an organization to be able to deliver what our members need and want from us as Farm Bureau.

I work closely with an advisory committee President Richard Gachert is appointed, including county Farm Bureau presidents and managers, IAA board members, Young Leaders and our president and vice president. We also have a team of staff focusing significant time on this effort. This interview,

farmer-led approach is one indication that we're meeting the OS differently than previous strategic planning efforts. We've reached a point where we want to bring you in to speed our own efforts before we start transitioning to our next phase of listening to the needs from as many of you as possible. Most importantly, IAA has clarified the need for the OS and the strategic challenges we face, which you can see in the accompanying graphic.

Addressing these challenges will likely require change, which I encourage you to embrace with an open mind. I think you'll agree, as an agriculture we are not about change. Particularly when we have over 100 years of success, as Illinois Farm Bureau and many of our county Farm Bureau do, we sometimes get complacent and think we're keeping things the same way we always have. But, that's changing agricultural landscape and demographics of our membership suggest otherwise. We cannot be paralyzed by our past success and our desire to make sure we're headed in the right direction. We need you as part of the discussion.

Each the advisory committee as something with you questions or comments.

The information gathering opportunities over the coming months are our chance to make sure we're headed in the right direction. We need you as part of the discussion.

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Mark Gebhardt is the chief strategy officer for the Illinois Farm Bureau.

WHY IS THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBER STRATEGY (OS) NEEDED?

We are seeing:

- Continued decline in membership
- Fewer and different types of farmers in the future with different resource and expectations
- The need to save members all stages of their careers
- Resource inconducities and the need to develop additional revenue streams
- Changing member and employee preferences on how to deliver services through both staffing and structure
- A need for better stewardship of our retirement funders

Therefore, county Farm Bureau must work together with a sense of urgency to meet the needs of the future while ensuring the advocacy and engagement needs of all members are being delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible.

STRATEGIC CHALLENGES TO BE CONFRONTED

- Shifting programs for farmers of the future
- Providing representation for all Illinois farmers
- Ensuring financial security
- Efficiently delivering value for members
- Supporting members' careers
- Focusing on important opportunities

Thank you for serving on election day

"Thank you for your service," our daughter told me after learning I applied to be an election judge.

Having never served in the military, I didn't think someone would apply that to me. I've since reconsidered that application to include jobs that volunteer for elections.

I have an opportunity to serve as an election judge after four decades as a reporter at Illinois election newspapers. Although I would've never volunteered, I've felt hidden observing the dysfunction and chaos in our government and politics.

I wanted to do more, to do my part for democracy and fair elections.

It was only to complete an election judge application. I filled out a short, online form and submitted it to the Bloomington Election Commission.

After receiving a prompt response and information about in-person or online training, I selected on Oct. 12 session.

The March 19 primary election may seem far away, but election preparation and training for judges are underway.

As a journalist, I've seen many mistakes about different ways to register and vote and reported on Illinois election security measures that cause fear, accurate results.

I am sure during my election judge training that the measure repeatedly stress everyone deserves the right to

HOW IS THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBER STRATEGY (OS) NEEDED?

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FarmWeek

Illinois Farm Bureau mission: Improve the economic well-being of agriculture and enrich the quality of farm family life.

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FROM FIELD TO STORAGE

The majority of the corn crop (95%) was harvested and in storage, such as these grain bins in Putnam County, in the hands of end users as of Nov. 13 in Illinois. An all-time low in rainfall and a warmer start helped county in the first two weeks of the month. Meanwhile, the temperature averaged 47.5 degrees the second week of November, 6.5 degrees above normal. Cooler temperatures were forecast for Thanksgiving week. (Photo by Gretchen Brown)

Earthquake 'shocking' to Putnam County residents

BY ERIN M. HEINKE, FarmWeek

Waking on the early hours of Wednesday morning, Putnam County farmer Luke Holly rubbed himself to find out what the rumbling would be heard was since no tremor was forecast in the area.

Holly is on the Putnam County Board and worried there was an accident at the local dry mill ahead of time.

"It was like a rumble of thunder but then it just stopped and there was just dead silence," Holly said.

"It was a very unexpected thing like it, my concern was that something in the area exploded."

Holly represented what

the U.S. Geological Survey would confirm as a 1.6 magnitude earthquake about 17 miles away from Holly in the northeastern part of Putnam County.

"I was shocked, we weren't expecting to wake up in the morning and have an earthquake, it doesn't seem like it should be

Congress advances farm bill extension

BY TIMOTHY EGERT, FarmWeek

American farmers will continue to have access to certain federal conservation and farm safety programs in 2014 after Congress advanced a one-year extension of the 2010 farm bill.

President Joe Biden signed into law on Nov. 16 a continuing resolution that averted a federal government shutdown on Nov. 17 and a year-end cliff for the measure, which passed the U.S. House a day earlier on a 360-16 vote.

Both senators and every House member from Illinois voted for the measure, except U.S. Reps. Mike Bost, R-Maryland, Dan Claitor, R-Delaware, Mary M. Miller, R-Oklahoma and Mike Chaboly, D-Chicago.

"This extension is in no way a substitute for passing a five-year farm bill and we remain committed to working together to get a done next year," the four leaders of the House and Senate Agriculture Committee said in a statement.

Authoring the stopgap budget measure is a two-year deadline that will maintain the Congress, page 7

No FarmWeek next week

Happy Thanksgiving! FarmWeek will not be published Nov. 27 as the upcoming holiday. The next issue will be dated Dec. 4.

Farmer nominations open for Watershed Advisory Board

BY TIMOTHY EGERT, FarmWeek

The city of Decatur, Illinois Farm Bureau and other partners are seeking members from the central Illinois agricultural community to serve on an advisory board overseeing federal conservation projects in the Lake Decatur Watershed.

The Lake Decatur Watershed Agricultural Advisory Board will be tasked with assisting government officials, private partners and other stakeholders with implementing a \$18 million grant awarded to the city through USDA's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

Nominations to serve as a voting member on the board are ongoing and open to farmers, landowners, farm and land managers, agricultural residents and other stakeholders who grow and

MORE INSIDE:

- How much will you? Packaging food cost? Details inside, PG 2
- Coverage of the National Agricultural Marketing Seminar, PG 6

board, and requirements for the nomination process can be found online, bit.ly/64875e.

Funds from the RCPP grant will be used over five years to fund agreements with growers and landowners to support certain practices aimed at improving water quality across the watershed and reducing sediment runoff and nutrient losses to the lake.

Funding and non-EMSA food and nutrient losses to the lake.

The area includes Illinois, Park and DuPage counties, with the Illinois, Friends Canal, Sand Creek, Willow Branch and Wildcat Creek watersheds among in the project "subwatersheds" for the initial stages of the program.

See Nominations, page 10

