



Maryland Farm Bureau celebrates 93rd gathering

Over 300 attended the 93rd Maryland Farm Bureau Annual Meeting and Convention at the Clarion Resort Hotel in Ocean City, December 7 to 10, 2009. Celebrating record-high membership and program achievements, members also took time to learn, share ideas and establish policy for the coming year.

MFB President W. Michael Phipps of Owings (Calvert County) presided over the 3-day meeting where two state vice presidents were re-elected to their leadership positions. Patricia Langenfelder of Kennedyville (Kent County) will retain her office of first vice president and Chuck Fry of Tuscarora (Frederick County) was re-elected as second vice president.

Silver Bowl

The event was highlighted with the annual awards banquet where Frederick County took the coveted Silver Bowl award for its outstanding program work in the past year. President Gareth Harshman accepted the honor for the second straight year.

Frederick County was one of 10 counties in the running for the honor, having received gold ratings in all six of the program areas. The honors are given for member benefits/membership, legislative affairs, women's leadership/agriculture education, young farmers, leadership development, and outstanding county Farm Bureau program. The other nine counties in contention were Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Caroline, Carroll, Charles, Harford, Montgomery, Prince George's and Queen Anne's.

In order to earn an award in any of the six program areas, county Farm Bureaus must submit an essay explaining how the program is communicated to members, what is the member involvement, what are the goals and planning activities and what were the results of the program and activities. The awards were judged and given a score and ranked gold, silver or bronze.

Distinguished Service

The Distinguished Service to Farm Bureau Award was presented to Thelma Bigelow of Kent County. "Miss Thelma" was married to Jim Bigelow Sr. for 56 years and has been active in the Farm Bureau Women's Committee at the county, state and national levels for decades.

At the county level, Thelma has been the Farm Bureau Women's Chair for 30 years. She participates in legislative affairs by contacting elected officials about agricultural issues and has organized county banquets, picnics and Farm City Week activities. She has been an active

member of the Kent County Farm Bureau Discussion group for 60 years. This is the oldest discussion group in the state, started in 1938.

At the state level, Thelma served as the State Farm Bureau Women's Committee Chair for 10 years. During that time, the name changed from the Associated Women of Farm Bureau to the Farm Bureau Women's Committee. While chairman, she set and obtained her goal of organized women's committees in all 23 counties. Thelma was a member of the MFB committee that met with Governor Mandel to request the establishment of the Maryland Department of Agriculture. She served on the committee that visited Virginia Farm Bureau to learn about the tire program.

At the national level, Thelma served as vice president of the Country Women's Council for three years. In that capacity, she attended world meetings in Australia and Oslo, Norway, and here in the U.S. where she was the official representative and offered greetings from the United States' delegation. She served on the AFBF Resolutions Committee and attended the annual meeting as a voting delegate for the AFBF Women's Committee for many years.

Young Farmers

The future of agriculture rests in the hands and hearts of the Young Farmers. To assist in the development of their leadership skills, both personally and professionally, the Maryland Farm Bureau and the American Farm Bureau Federation organized four areas of competition – the Achievement Award, Excellence in Agriculture Award, Discussion Meet and Collegiate Discussion Meet.

The winners of the 2008 Young Farmer Achievement Award were Brian and Sarah Johnson of Somerset County and Matt Schnebly of Frederick County captured the Excellence in Agriculture honor. William Layton of Dorchester County won the Discussion Meet honor. All of those winners will represent Maryland Farm Bureau in the national competition at the AFBF convention in San Antonio, Texas, in January. Kelsey Dertzbaugh of Frederick County was the winner of the Collegiate Discussion Meet and her national competition will take place at the AFBF Young Farmers and Ranchers Leadership Conference in Sacramento, California, in February.

Capturing the Outstanding Young Farmer County Group was Frederick County. Chair Becky Burrier accepted the honor from MFB Young Farmer Chair Brian Johnson.

Farm Bureau Women

The Farm Bureau Women are an extremely important part of the organization. Chair Evelyn Wilcom presented the Outstanding Farm Bureau Women's Group Award to Mary Amoss, chair of the Harford County Farm Bureau Women's Committee.

Safemark Dealers

The top three Safemark dealers in Maryland were recognized based on dollar sales volume. The number one dealer in the state was Kinnamon's of Caroline County and taking second was The Hardware Store of Wicomico County. Rounding out the top three was Gibson's Shell located in Anne Arundel County.

Scholarships

Maryland Farm Bureau awards a \$3,000 scholarship to ten young adults from Farm Bureau families and who are pursuing college degrees. They are:

- Ben Butler of Montgomery County is the son of Wade and Angela Butler of Germantown. Ben is currently a junior at the University of Maryland College Park majoring in horticulture and crop production.
- Jeanne Carol Herbert of Charles County is the daughter of Addison and Susan Herbert of Faulkner. She is attending the College of Southern Maryland and is a freshman biological sciences/pre-veterinary sciences student.
- Theodore Patterson of Cecil County is the son of Ross Patterson of Perryville. He is a senior at the University of Delaware majoring in political science.
- Benjamin Amoss of Harford County is the son of Bill and Mary Amoss of Fallston. He is a junior at Virginia Tech majoring in engineering.
- Michael Amoss of Harford County is also the son of Bill and Mary Amoss. He is a sophomore at Harford Community College majoring in agriculture business.
- Marshall Cahall of Kent County is the son of John W. Cahall, Jr. and Kellie King. He is a sophomore studying civil engineering at Washington College.
- Ashley Greenhawk of Wicomico County is the daughter of William and Juanita Greenhawk of Salisbury. She is a freshman at Virginia Tech majoring in dairy science.
- Allyson Lethbridge of Carroll County is the daughter of Stephen and Donna Lethbridge of Union Bridge. She is a sophomore at Hood College studying secondary education.
- Lauren Marie Roop of Frederick County is the daughter Sam and Mary Jane Roop of Thurmont. She is a junior majoring in psychology at Grove City College.
- Stephanie Shortall of Queen Anne's County is the daughter of Steve and Nancy Shortall of Centreville. She is a sophomore at Delaware Valley College majoring in small animal science.

Retiring and New Directors

Three Farm Bureau leaders were recognized for their service on the Maryland Farm Bureau Board of Directors as they retired. They were Earl Griffith of Anne Arundel County; Gareth Harshman of Frederick County; and Gerry O'Mara of Talbot County.

Newly elected directors to the board were Ross Moreland, Anne Arundel County; Dr. Raymond Ediger, Frederick County; and Eddie Boyle, Talbot County.