

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU CONVENTION PRESENTERS

Chris Fesko

9 a.m. Monday, Dec. 4th
Farm Bureau Women's Meeting



Raised in Upstate New York on a small farm, Chris Fesko is the second of seven children. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Cortland State College with an emphasis in science education and her master's education degree is also in science. Now the mother of three grown children and a wife of 28 years to Rick Fesko, Chris is active in Hospice and the local church as a lay speaker. She is also an award winning educator, farmer, videographer and producer, is the creator of the On The Farm video series. These videos are delighting children and adults both in the U.S. and internationally. Winner of four Telly Awards, three Parent's Choice awards and many more, Chris' enterprises have earned a place on the front line of education and entertainment of all ages. Her development of the Discovery Center welcomes school children to a learning environment in her huge barn. As a speaker, Chris brings many of her life experiences, boundless enthusiasm and sense of humor to her audiences.

Keith Eckel

1:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 4th



Keith W. Eckel is a board member of Nationwide, a \$158 billion diversified financial services organization based in Columbus, Ohio. He also serves on the boards of other Nationwide companies including Nationwide Financial Services, Inc. Mr. Eckel serves as board chairman of Gartmore Global Asset Management Trust and is former board chairman of Allied Group, Inc. Mr. Eckel is owner of Fred W. Eckel Sons and president of Eckel Farms, Inc. in northeast Pennsylvania. He received the Master Farmer award from Penn State University in 1982. He is a trustee of Pennsylvania State University, board member of the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association and former member of the Pennsylvania Agricultural Land Preservation Board. He is a former president of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, a position he held for 15 years. He has served as a board member and executive committee member of the American Farm Bureau Federation and is a former vice president of the Pennsylvania Council of Cooperative Extension Associations. Born in Scranton, Pa., Mr. Eckel attended Keystone Junior College, Dickinson College and Penn State University. He is a member and past lay leader of Bethel United Methodist Church.

LaDonna Gatlin

1:45 and 8 p.m. Monday, Dec. 4th



LaDonna Gatlin believes one defining moment can redefine our lives. She knows firsthand that we can't live someone else's dream—that in order to be our personal best, we must find our own voice and "sing our own song." LaDonna literally grew up on stage singing with her brothers - the legendary Gatlin Brothers. In the early 1970s the Gatlins took their family harmony to Nashville. But a detour appeared on the road to stardom - LaDonna got married. At this defining moment, she realized that success for her could be measured in a different way, to "sing a different song" apart from her brothers. Her keynotes and concerts put her on the road more than 100 days a year. She's shared her message everywhere, from corporate powerhouses to the prison cells of death row. Her presentations drive home common sense wisdom for everyday living. Add her outstanding vocal ability to the mix, and you get a winning combination that educates, inspires and entertains! LaDonna is an active member of the National Speakers Association, and has earned its highest professional designation, the Certified Speaking Professional (CSP). In July of 2005, LaDonna was one of five inductees into the Speakers Hall of Fame, a lifetime award for speaking excellence and professionalism. She's recorded four solo CD's and is a contributing author to the best-selling book series Chicken Soup for the Soul.

Kimberly Lechluder

Miss Maryland Agriculture

3:25 p.m. Monday, Dec. 4th



Miss Maryland Agriculture Kimberly Lechluder lives with her parents, Fred and Robin Lechluder and her brother on Sunny Ridge Farm in Laytonsville. She was raised on her family's 1,750-acre grain and livestock farm where they raise beef cattle, hogs, corn, soybeans, wheat and hay. They have 70 head of commercial cows and raise market jogs for 4-H projects. A graduate of Damascus High School in 2005, she completed 30 credit hours of college work at Montgomery Community College and is now a sophomore at the University of Maryland College Park, majoring in agriculture business. While in high school, Miss Lechluder was a member of Student Government and was active in the FFA, competing on the floriculture at the National FFA Convention in 2004. Since she was eight years old, she has been a member of the Montgomery County 4-H Beef, Sheep and Swine Club and the livestock judging team. She was also a member of the Goshen Community 4-H Club. In 2003, Miss Lechluder was selected as a member of the Maryland 4-H Livestock Judging B team and participated in regional contests. The lifetime member of the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair is also active with the Damascus Community Fair. Miss Lechluder plans to graduate with a bachelor's degree in agriculture business and hopes to own and operate her own floral business.

M. Wayne Lambertson

9:30 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 5th



M. Wayne Lambertson owns and operates a 2,700-acre farm producing corn, soybeans and wheat, and a 300,000-capacity broiler operation in Pocomoke City. He currently serves on the board of directors of MidAtlantic Farm Credit. In addition, Mr. Lambertson has served on the Farm Credit Council Board of Directors since 1994, and was elected chairman of the board in 2004. He serves as co-chairman of the Farm Credit System's HORIZONS project. He and his wife, Diane, have two sons, Jason and Brandon, who are involved in the family operation. The Lambertsons also operate a restaurant on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Andrea N. Semmel

10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 5th



Andrea Semmel is a dairy farm operator from Schnecksville, Pennsylvania. She, along with her family, have a registered Holstein and Brown Swiss Dairy operation that consists of 100 head of milking cows and 125 head of young stock. Excelsior Farm has 230 acres of corn, hay and double-crop rye. She has been a chairperson of various county Farm Bureau committees and has served as chairman and secretary for her state Farm Bureau Young Farmers. She has been a Farm Bureau member for 15 years. The Pennsylvania Farm Bureau representative serves on the Making American Agriculture Productive and Profitable Committee for the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Kim Coble

1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 5th



Kim Coble joined the Chesapeake Bay Foundation in 1992 as the Senior Scientist in the Foundation's Virginia office, where she provided scientific review on regulatory issues and lobbied for water quality legislation. In 1996, she moved to Maryland and became the Senior Scientist in the Foundation's Maryland Office and eventually served as Assistant Director. In June 2003, Kim was named Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Maryland Executive Director, where she directs policy and manages a diverse team of scientists, land use specialists, lawyers, grassroots coordinators and volunteers to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay.

Dr. Cheng-I Wei

2:45 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 5th



Dr. Cheng-I Wei became Dean of University of Maryland's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources on last year. He earned a Bachelor of Science in biology from the Tunghai University of Taiwan in 1970, a Masters of Science in medical microbiology from National Taiwan University in 1972, and a Ph.D. in microbiology from the University of California, Davis, in 1979. Before heading to College Park, he was Professor and Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies of the College of Human Environmental Sciences at Oklahoma State University, a position he had held since August 2002. Dr. Wei also served as Interim Head of the Department of Nutritional Sciences, where he interacted regularly with the Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service. Dr. Wei's research interests are in nutritional safety, toxicology and immunotoxicology. He has secured over \$11 million in external funds; published 185 referred papers; presented numerous papers at both national and international meetings; and graduated 16 masters and 14 doctoral students.

Lewis R. Riley

3:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 5th



Lewis Riley was appointed Secretary of the Maryland Department of Agriculture on January 22, 2003. This is his second time in the leadership position as he was named the fourth secretary on May 17, 1994. He retired from the position on December 31, 1997, because of the health of his wife. Lew has been an active farmer, poultryman and businessman with more than 50 years experience, serving as president of Beaver Run Farms Inc., a family farm corporation he operates with his son. They raise 1,150 acres of grain along with a swine, cattle and poultry operation located in Wicomico County. He has been farming independently since the age of 16, while still in high school. He received his American Farmer Degree in 1956 and was the county's outstanding farmer in 1961. He has received numerous awards, including the Maryland Grain Producer's Man of the Year and the Delmarva Poultry Industry's Distinguished Citizenship Award. During his 25-year tenure as an elected official (12 years in county and 13 years in the General Assembly) he established a reputation as a knowledgeable spokesman for agriculture. He is a member of the Parsonsburg Volunteer Fire Department, Jerusalem United Methodist Church and Wicomico County Farm Bureau. He and his wife Ginny have three children and five grandchildren.

Emily Keggan

4 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 5th



Emily Keggan is Nationwide's Relationship Manager for Maryland Farm Bureau's sponsor affiliation with Nationwide. Ms. Keggan began her career with Nationwide in 2001 as a Loss Control Representative for Nationwide Agribusiness. Ms. Keggan grew up on a dairy farm in central Pennsylvania and served agriculture through 4-H, FFA and Dairy Promotion. Her family's farm was recognized as a Century Farm in 2002. Ms. Keggan graduated from Delaware Valley College with a Bachelor's of Science in Agribusiness and minors in Communications and Agronomy. Emily is heavily involved in Del Val's Alumni Executive Committee as treasurer and chair to several alumni subcommittees. She participates in the Pennsylvania Dairy Princess and Promotions Services program, is active in the First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem, is co-owner of Keggan Tractor Pulling Team and is active in competitions with her dog Reggie in Flying "W" Dog Agility. She is currently pursuing her Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter designation.

Brittany Lietz Miss Maryland

7 p.m. Tuesday, December 5th



Miss Maryland Brittany Lietz is a native of Edgewater and is a student at the University of Maryland School of Nursing. She hopes to attain a master's degree in pediatric oncology nursing. In April of 2005, Brittany was diagnosed with Stage II malignant melanoma, the most serious and lethal form of skin cancer. She is a patient at John's Hopkins hospital, where she must visit on a regular basis to make sure that the cancer has not spread. The diagnosis and 24 surgeries have left her with more than 25 scars covering her body and the constant reminder of why she must teach people about this disease and help prevent them from getting it. Brittany has been dancing and performing since the age of 2 and has competed in dance competitions across the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Italy. Her greatest dance accomplishment was becoming the first overall soloist at the Showbiz National Dance Competition. Brittany's love for dance led her to pageants. Along with winning the title of Miss Maryland 2006, Brittany was also the recipient of the Newcomer Talent award and Rookie of the Year award. Using her title and crown as a microphone she has been able to partner with national organizations to help spread the message about skin cancer prevention, detection, treatment and research.

C. Ronald Franks

8:40 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 6th



C. Ronald Franks was appointed Secretary of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources on January 20, 2003. A familiar face in the state's capital, Dr. Franks was a member of the House of Delegates from 1991 to 1995. An avid angler, he is the proprietor of Winchester Creek Outfitters, an Eastern Shore kayak and fly-fishing business, and has had his own dental practice since 1973. Dr. Franks completed his education at Georgetown University Dental School cum laude in 1966, after attending Western Maryland College and the University of Maryland. A member of the Maryland Farm Bureau since 1975, he has served on numerous professional and community boards and commissions, including the Northeast Regional and Maryland Board of Dental Examiners, as founder and teacher in dental assisting at Chesapeake Community College, former member and officer of the PTA and nominated to the Anne Arundel County School Board. As DNR Secretary, Dr. Franks serves on several boards, including the Governor's Council on the Chesapeake Bay, Rural Legacy Board, Smart Growth Sub-cabinet, Chesapeake Bay Commission, Governor's Pesticide Council, State Soil Conservation Committee and the Task Force to Study the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation.

S. Anthony McCann

9:10 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 6th



Anthony McCann was appointed Secretary of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene on October 1, 2004. He had served as Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services from 1986 to 1989 and executed a \$400 billion budget for a staff of 117,000. As Assistant Secretary for Management at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs from 1989 to 1993, he oversaw a \$30 billion budget for a staff of 240,000 while advising the Secretary on medical care and research, housing, and educational assistance. His Congressional experience includes an appointment as the clerk and staff director of the subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee that funds most of the federal government's programs in health, education and labor. He also served as Commissioner on the President's Task Force to Improve Health Care Delivery for Our Nation's Veterans. For the last four years, he served as Director of Financial Affairs for the Smithsonian Institution. A lifelong Montgomery County native, Mr. McCann earned his Bachelor of Arts from Lake Forest College in Illinois in 1966 and his Master of Arts from Syracuse University in 1969. He has been a member of the faculty of Georgetown University since 1993 where he teaches Liberal Studies and Budget and Public Policy.