



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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Maryland Farm Bureau celebrates 96th gathering

Patricia Langenfelder of Kennedyville (Kent County) was re-elected president of the state's largest general agriculture organization during its 96th Maryland Farm Bureau Annual Meeting and Convention at the Clarion Resort Hotel in Ocean City this week. Re-elected in the vice president roles were First Vice President Chuck Fry of Tuscarora (Frederick County) and Vice President Jim Steele of Woodbine (Carroll County).

Over 400 attended the gathering December 4 to 6, 2011, where members celebrated record-high membership and program achievements, took time to learn and share ideas and established policy for the coming year.

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 Tom Browning accepted the honor for the second year in a row.

Frederick County was one of six counties to receive 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 top-rated counties were Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Montgomery 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.

The top-scoring counties in each of the program areas were presented President's Awards for their results and innovation. Honored counties were Baltimore for ag education, leadership development and outstanding county program; Frederick for legislative affairs and young farmers; and Caroline for member benefits/membership.

Distinguished Service

The Distinguished Service to Farm Bureau Award was presented to Evelyn Wilcom, an active Farm Bureau member for more than 50 years from Frederick County. Along with her late husband, Mike, she farmed and served on the county and state board of directors. She has been a tireless advocate for the women's leadership committee and agricultural education, chairing both the county and state women's groups.

Evelyn has assisted with many programs, including safety camps, the dairy bar, discussion groups, the City Streets, Country Roads agricultural education exhibit at the Great Frederick Fair and even created the first Maryland Farm Bureau Women's cookbook. She serves on the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation Board of Directors where she recruits teachers for the annual Ag in the Classroom workshop, organizes the Book Bundle campaign for elementary schools and promotes the Ag Totes for middle school students.

She owns and operates a dairy farm with her sons and is active in the New Market Grange as well as the New Market and Urbana fire departments.

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 winner of the 2011 Young Farmer Achievement Award is Jason Scott of Dorchester County and James and Michele Adkins of Wicomico County captured the Excellence in Agriculture honor. Becky Burrier of Frederick County won the Discussion Meet honor. All of those winners will represent Maryland Farm Bureau in the national competition at the AFBF convention in Honolulu, Hawaii, in January. Mike Amoss of Harford County was the winner of the Collegiate Discussion Meet and his national competition will take place at the AFBF Young Farmers and Ranchers Leadership Conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in February.

Farm Bureau Women

The Farm Bureau Women's Committee is an important part of the organization, planning and coordinating many agriculture education and legislative events throughout the year. Chairperson Elaine Moreland of Caroline County led the group's business meeting which featured nationally known speaker Jane Jenkins Herlong. Jennifer Cross of Prince George's County was elected vice chairperson for the group.

Safemark Dealers

The top three Safemark dealers in Maryland were recognized based on dollar sales volume. The number one dealer in the state was Classic Tire Service of Queen Anne's County. Kinnamon's Service of Caroline County took second place and J. David Mullinix of Howard County rounded out the top three.

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 Walt Wells of Calvert County, Bob McCormick of Queen Anne's County and Tom Browning of Frederick County.

Newly elected directors to the board were Tommy Briscoe of Calvert County, John Draper of Queen Anne's County and Charles Brault of Frederick County.

Fundraising Auction

At the conclusion of the awards banquet, farmer members actively bid on items donated by county Farm Bureaus to raise money for the Maryland Family Farmers Legal Defense Fund. The fund is assisting embattled young farmers Alan and Kristin Hudson of Berlin who are fighting a lawsuit with New York-based Waterkeeper Alliance. After the Hudson's humble and emotional address, farmers raised \$28,300 for the cause.

Maryland Farm Bureau is a private, non-profit membership organization. It is controlled by its members through the democratic process and is financed by voluntary membership dues. Its strength comes from the active participation of over 37,000 member families that belong to the state's 23 county Farm Bureaus.

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