

WINTER 2020



MONTANA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

Spokesman

WE CARE FOR THE COUNTRY



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Spokesman

MONTANA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

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ON THE COVER:
Winter on the Saddle Mountain Ranch
near Bozeman.

Photo by Laura Nelson.

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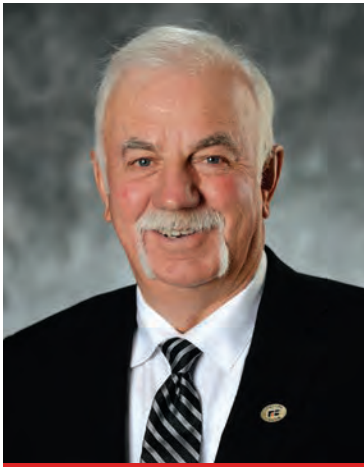


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Hans McPherson
President, Montana Farm
Bureau Federation

“I’m confident in the future of agriculture, knowing this is not the first trial farmers and ranchers have faced.”

Celebrating the past, **ready for the future**

What a great and glorious time of the year! At the time I am writing this editorial it is a couple weeks before Christmas when we all celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As we look out our windows and across our farms, we must be moved with the blessings we’ve had in the last year as we celebrated our 100 years of Montana Farm Bureau. What a magnificent convention we had. Thanks to many talented individuals who dedicated hundreds of hours of planning and preparation to have an unmatched celebration of Montana agriculture. It is a testament to why we belong to a great organization where we come together to find common ground in common goals and move forward to support each other through the trials we face in agriculture. Nobody said it was going to be easy, but as we feed the world and think about this special time of year, we can be proud of our accomplishments in our efforts to grow the most abundant, safest, nutritious, cleanest and affordable food in the world.

These accomplishments were not the work of one individual but of hundreds of people who made it possible for our organization to reach our 100-year anniversary and have a grand celebration. It was an accomplishment of which each and every one of us should be proud. I am especially grateful to the hundreds of leaders who came before and paved the way for Montana Farm Bureau to be the great and grand organization it is today. We have substantial influence and power both at the state capital and at the federal level.

I am humbled and proud to be honored with leading this organization. It is daunting to think about the monumental task of



keeping this organization on track and moving forward so 100 years from now our leaders can celebrate the second century of Montana Farm Bureau. This is not going to be easy as there are many trying times ahead for agriculture and our organization; however, we need to be proactive in facing the challenges.

One of those challenges is for the first time in more than 30 years we are experiencing stagnant membership growth. Our great partners at Mountain West Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company are facing the same kind of hardships we face because of changing weather conditions which have resulted in costlier claims and losses.

I’m confident in the future of agriculture, knowing this is not the first trial farmers and ranchers have faced. We are very resilient. I know we will rise to the challenge and endure, even becoming better and stronger. Just like the FFA creed says, “With a faith born not of words but deeds.”

Let us start the next century of Montana Farm Bureau with 2020 vision, giving hope and confidence to our next generations of leaders. Let us invite our friends and neighbors to join with us in moving forward to, as the FFA creed also says, “better days through better ways.”

Happiest of New Year wishes for all!



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A Taxing Study

The Montana Legislature passed a bill during the past session setting up a committee of legislators and public members to do an overall study of Montana's taxation system. The committee has had a couple of organizational meetings, holding their first meeting November 18 to discuss our taxation system challenges and potential solutions. Below is background on our tax system.

Montana's tax system was founded on measurable data like square feet, barrels, tons and board feet. If you could see feel and touch it, we taxed it. Montana's property tax initially was meant to fund local government and schools, with the income tax to fund state government; growth and shortfalls were covered by natural resource taxes. If we grew it, cut it, milled it, dug it, pumped it, burned it or refined it, we taxed it. It worked reasonably well. As resource industries grew our economy grew, due to the fact they employed many people at good wages who paid income taxes. If you were one of the companies that transmitted the energy from burning it or pumping it, we taxed it at 3-4 times the level of other property; those costs were passed on to the consumer essentially making the energy companies tax collectors as well as producers. All was right with the world.

Then somebody said stop doing that and we limited our cutting and milling. Folks didn't like our digging and burning so that was curtailed. The world economy caused our pumping and refining to become extremely volatile and unstable as a tax source. Suddenly, our natural resources weren't fulfilling their end of the deal on paying taxes. To further exacerbate the situation, our largest employers, the mills, smelters and mines were replaced by government offices, schools and health care. Those jobs pay well but were limited to our largest population centers and in some cases, what has replaced our resource industry doesn't pay taxes. The State continued to grow and citizens still demanded more services from our government so lawmakers turned to the most stable source of taxation; property.



After all, the property isn't going to leave the state, residential growth was booming and different businesses were setting up shop in Montana. We now find ourselves at a point when property owners are complaining about the cost of owning property in Montana and businesses are starting to compare our tax system to other states in the area to see if we are competitive. Our consumers can find anything and everything on the internet usually at less money. Our brick-and-mortar businesses (those that own buildings etc.) are not able to compete and often close, thus narrowing the tax base and exacerbating the situation.

This alarming change has led to the aforementioned study of the taxation system in Montana. The committee is charged with assessing our system and recommending taxation policy to meet the challenges of a new economy in Montana. Much of the conversation has revolved around a new source of revenue for the State. The only realistic option is a consumption tax, better known as a sales tax. Montana has touted the increasing portion of our economy that comes from tourism and service industry dollars. In the opinion of many, visitors to our state offer a great source of new revenue. Most agree we pay sales tax

in every state we visit with the exception of three. Farm Bureau is working with a coalition of business interests that have made the following suggestions to the committee.

Simplification. Montana has more tax classes and sub-classes of property than many of our neighboring states. By simplifying, it would be much easier to manage our tax system.

Broaden the tax base. Although we would not support a new tax until we saw the details, Farm Bureau policy supports a sales tax with commensurate cuts in other taxes.

I have faith the committee will develop some changes but I am not holding my breath on major tax changes. After all, the old adage, "Don't tax you, don't tax me, tax that man behind the tree" still holds true for nearly all Montanans.



John Youngberg
Executive Vice President, MFBF

“ Broaden the tax base. Although we would not support a new tax until we saw the details, Farm Bureau policy supports a sales tax with commensurate cuts in other taxes. ”



A Redo Kind of Year

BY MARIAH SHAMMEL

New Year's has always been one my favorite holidays. Before marriage and kids, it was more the "Eve" part that I looked forward to. My friends and I would plan our festivities weeks in advance, dressing up and indulging ourselves with fancy food and drink before dancing the night away until the clock struck midnight, when we would toast to something really profound...and then dance some more. Now that I'm "adulting," my New Year's itinerary is a little less exciting (sometimes I'm even awake to see the ball drop in Times Square) but that doesn't mean I look forward to it any less than I used to. These days, it's less about the lead-up and more about what it all means.

The beginning of the new year has always been a time of reflection; a good excuse to look in the rear-view mirror and ponder the past twelve months, taking note of the things that worked, the things that didn't and trying to figure out how to make the next 365 days even better. Some years I don't feel like there's much to change and other years I wish there was a big red "life reset" button I could hit and just start over.

That's precisely the kind of year 2019 was for us. If there was even the slightest, most remote chance that something could go wrong, it did. Weather wreaked havoc on calving, seeding, harvest, and every other ranch-related activity in between, not to mention how miserable it made the baseball games and soccer scrimmages we found ourselves trudging to. We weren't able to get seed in the ground this fall, neither cattle or grain prices were anything to write home about and a freak storm blew our brand-new, one-step-to-completion, calving barn to the ground, snapping 6 by 6's in half and shredding trusses like they were matchsticks. Time after time, unplanned events left us reeling and scrambling to right the ship. Luckily, the one part of our lives that somehow escaped the dreadful curse was our family's health and well-being, which certainly did not go unnoticed and is primarily what helped

Favorite Farmer and I keep our sanity and gratefulness—with help from a fully stocked wine cabinet.

There are good things that happened last year too, which we definitely don't want to ignore. We were able to go on several memorable family camping trips and took our oldest to his first "real" baseball game for his eighth birthday. We watched our youngest take her first steps, our six-year-old find her love of books, our three-year-old turn into a shark and dinosaur-loving-aficionado, and we saw the construction (and re-construction) of a beautiful building that signifies so much more than the tangible purposes it was built for.

In some ways (well, maybe one), it's even a little hard to say goodbye to 2019. Cora Jane has gone from a snuggly infant to a sassy, willful one-year-old who lives for the moment her siblings step off the school bus. It's so gratifying and fulfilling to watch her grow into a little self-functioning person, but knowing this is the last time we'll see one of our babies make the transformation is certainly bittersweet.

Whether we're ready (Pick me! Pick me!) or not, here it is. 2020. All over the world, in different countries and cultures, there are celebrations to mark the resetting of the calendar. It might happen at different times of year and the festivities may be unfamiliar, but what it symbolizes is all the

same—resolutions, endless possibilities, and new beginnings.

When life is good, well, life is good. When things go bad it can feel like your world is crushing in around you. You give everything you have just to keep your head above water and when the waves keep coming you don't know how many more mouthfuls of water you can stomach. My mom has always said "no matter how bad you think you have it, things could always be worse." I can't remember how many times Favorite Farmer and I told that to each other over

the course of the past year but it was a lot. And it certainly helped us to take things one day at a time, focusing on the good parts, even if that slice of life seemed a little skinny on occasion.

Thankfully, it's in the past now so I can leave all that all behind me and move on. Who knows what the new year has in store for us, but as long as our family is happy and healthy, I'll try to keep my complaining to a minimum.

I wouldn't turn down some good crop prices, better weather and maybe enough time to finish a project or two but I'll take whatever I can get. It could always be worse and if all else fails, there's always next year.

Happy New Year from me and mine to you and yours!

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Avoid a House Fire this Winter

The colder months bring about a number of risks, most relating to snow and ice hazards. But did you know that the occurrence of house fires increases significantly during the winter?

Winter house fires can be caused by lighted holiday decorations, lit candles and indoor cooking. Fires in winter are commonly caused by portable heaters, which can become flammable when left on for long periods of time or when left next to something that could easily catch fire. In fact, December, January and February are the peak months for heating fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

Prevention Tips

An estimated 29 percent of home heating fires are caused by a heating source being too close to things that can burn. To prevent this, keep anything flammable at least three feet from any heat sources, including space heaters, radiators, fireplaces and wood stoves. You should

also be careful to never leave a heater unattended or running for an extended period of time. Always unplug your heater when it is not in use and do not put it on carpet, as this increases the risk of a fire.

You can reduce the risk of an electrical fire by plugging only one heat-producing appliance into an electrical outlet at a time. Heat-producing appliances include not only space heaters, but also common appliances like coffee makers and microwaves. Never use an extension cord with a heat producing appliance. No matter the size of the heater, it can overload the circuit or overheat the cord and cause a fire in a matter of seconds.

Winter is also a popular time for burning candles, and candles are responsible for approximately 23 fires every day. Avoid a candle fire in your home by keeping lit candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn. Place candles on a sturdy, uncluttered surface and always remember to blow out lit candles before leaving a room or going to bed. Keep all

candles, matches and lighters out of reach of children, and consider using flameless candles for decorative purposes. They will give you the look of a real candle without the risk of starting a fire.

Last but not least in terms of risk are wood and pellet stoves. To minimize the risk of fire, have your chimney and stove inspected and cleaned by a certified chimney sweep every fall before heating season. You should also clean the inside of your stove periodically using a wire brush, and always allow ashes to cool completely before disposing of them. As with other heating devices, keep anything that can burn a good distance away—at least 3 feet. Keep a close eye on children whenever a wood or pellet stove is being used.

By staying aware of the increased risk of house fires during the winter season and taking steps to prevent them from occurring, you'll be able to sit back and relax in the warmth of your home more comfortably.



Expect the Unexpected

House fires increase significantly during the winter months. Can you replace your entire home in the event of a fire?

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A career of leadership

Carla Lawrence elected to Women's Leadership Committee (WLC) Chair

BY REBECCA COLNAR, SPOKESMAN EDITOR

A career in the U.S. Army taught Carla Lawrence about the principles of leadership. "You learn to work as a team and that the mission is bigger than yourself. In the Army, you are only as strong as the weakest link. The Army doesn't care about where you came from, they only care about making you a soldier to serve the good of the whole," Lawrence said.

That training has followed the hard-working, organized Lawrence through her other career paths. She joined the Army as a private in 1985 and served active duty for three years, spending most of her time in West Germany. At Fort Dix, NY she retired from active duty Army, and raised her hand to serve in the Montana National Guard. After reaching the rank of staff sergeant, she attended Warrant

Officer Candidate School. She retired as a Chief Warrant Three from military service after 22 years.

Thanks to assistance from the military, Lawrence was able to attend Montana State University where she earned a bachelor's degree in Range Science. While growing up in Wibaux, her dad had a small family farm, and attending schools in Miles City cemented her love and interest in farming and ranching. After she got her degree at MSU, she started her ag-related career with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) where she served as Rangeland Management Specialist, which provided her with the opportunity to work with the Montana Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (MT GLCI).

"I really enjoyed working with the



Newly elected Montana Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee Chair Carla Lawrence with husband, Will Alexander, at their ranch in Boyd.

ranchers, who were all prominent, proactive conservationists," said Lawrence. "They were all very much grazing land managers and advocates for ag in general. During the time with GLCI, my duty was coordinating the committee, and encouraging them to be a voice for agriculture."

Lawrence retired from her full-time job with NRCS in 2011, but continued her work with the Montana GLCI as an independent contractor. In December 2018, she officially "retired" from her work with GLCI, which allowed her to switch more of her energy to Farm Bureau.

"I first became acquainted with Montana Farm Bureau when I set up the GLCI booth at the MFBF conventions," Lawrence said. "I got to know so many people with Farm Bureau from visiting with them at my booth during the conventions. Then when I married Will Alexander in 2011, who is a cattle rancher in Boyd, he said he'd continue to pay for my Montana Farm Bureau membership if I wanted to get more involved. I started attending the MFBF annual meetings as a member instead of as an NRCS employee; the first Summer Conference I attended was in Sidney."

As her interest in Farm Bureau grew, she became involved as WLC Chair of



Carla Lawrence displays the table decorations before "The Longest Trail" Farm Bureau play.

Carbon/Stillwater Counties Farm Bureau, then spent two years as chair of the MFBF Annual Convention Committee, including the Gala chair of the 100th Annual MFBF Convention. Ever notice the creative decorations on the tables at MFBF meetings? Lawrence offered to create the centerpieces for the annual convention, and has been helping devise plans for decorations for the tables and the stage ever since. In 2017, she attended the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) convention with MFBF members and Gretchen Schubert, serving as an alternate voting delegate on the floor. In 2018, she attended the AFBF Women's Fly-In in Washington, D.C. and visited Montana Congressional delegates on Capitol Hill.

Lawrence, who was elected as MFBF Women's Leadership Committee Chair in 2019, acknowledged that she plans to continue the work her predecessor, Gretchen Schubert, put towards the committee. She added that she looks forward to working closely with MFBF's WLC staff coordinator, Alena Standley.

"Alena does an amazing job. We will

be looking at ways the WLC can bring more women into the fold and promote projects, workshops or events in the counties that will help to get women in Farm Bureau involved," Lawrence said. "As we all know, there is strength

“ We will be looking at ways the WLC we can bring more women into the fold and promote projects, workshops or events in the counties that will help to get women in Farm Bureau involved. ”

in numbers.” She hopes to continue to promote the awareness about Ag Accurate Books, how they can be accessed and how to get the educational books to the teachers, as well as continuing to support Rikki Swant with

the My Ag Literacy program.

Returning from trips to national meetings or trainings should lead to sharing the information with other members through a written report, Lawrence believes. "It's not that difficult. When you attend a meeting on that scale, take notes and come back with the information you have learned to share with others. We need to bring home information that will help to serve the members, for the good of the whole."

Although national meetings serve their purpose, the energetic Lawrence stresses Farm Bureau's adherence to grassroots policy. "Before you move up to have a position at the state or national committee level, you need to strengthen your own county Farm Bureau first. Farm Bureau is grassroots and local. That's the foundation of what Farm Bureau is all about."

Lawrence added that she is "humbled and honored to serve" and looks forward to working with the MFBF and the WLC committee to continue to strengthen the organization.



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100for100

For the past year, the Montana Farm Bureau Federation has been celebrating 100 years of commitment to Montana's agricultural industry and its rural communities. During the Centennial Celebration November 13, 2019, 100 members who stepped up to the challenge of being leaders for the agricultural industry and Montana Farm Bureau were recognized. Farm Bureau knows it takes more than 100 people to move an organization like Montana Farm Bureau through its first 100 years and gives a heartfelt thanks to these 100 members and to all of the people who have had an impact on MFBF's growth and success.

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November 11-14, 2019

Northern and DoubleTree Hotels, Billings

The Montana Farm Bureau celebrated its centennial convention with a fabulous gala at Swift River Ranch, a Farm Bureau play from 1919, top-notch speakers, excellent workshops, a thoughtful delegate session and plenty of extraordinary receptions and socials where members had the opportunity to gather and reminisce. In addition, American Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall joined members for most of the conference.

The Centennial Convention Kick-off Social November 12 was followed by the Pondera Players performing "The Long Trail", resulting in plenty of laughs from the audience as the 100-year old play examined changing technologies and attitudes.

Congressman Greg Gianforte spoke at the Century Club breakfast, citing some of the successes and challenges of Congress, followed by AFBF President Zippy Duvall and MFBF President Hans McPherson having a "fireside" chat where they candidly discussed the hot topics like trade and labor. Keynote speaker Duane Martinz encouraged members to not get bogged down in the negative, while Bruce Vincent, founder of Provider Pals and an advocate for the natural resource industry, explained how farmers and ranchers need to step up and get involved, for the

time is ripe. Workshops ranged from "Breaking Down Barriers to Create a Successful Business Transition Plan" to "Compassionate Conversations about Mental Health and Farming" and "Using Social Media to Build Your Brand."

This year counties received their recognition for their hard work during the County Awards Breakfast Wednesday morning followed by the Resolutions Session where voting delegates debated and voted on Farm Bureau policy for the coming year.

The Centennial Celebration Gala at Swift River Ranch was a culmination of 100 years for Farm Bureau, as more than 400 former MFBF presidents, employees, insurance agents, members and so many others dressed up to enjoy the unique festivity and greet old friends and business associates. Selected members – even some from 100 years ago – were recognized. Following President Duvall's heart-felt address, the winner of the Young Farmer & Rancher Discussion Meet was named, and as the band struck up energetic country music, the dancing and socializing began anew. It was a spectacular way to celebrate the success and resilience of Montana Farm Bureau.

For follow-up stories and more information on the convention, visit www.mfbf.org/news and check out the Montana Farm Bureau Facebook and Instagram pages.

PEOPLE



Farm Bureau leaders visit with Senator Steve Daines: (Left to right): MFBF Executive VP John Youngberg, Sen. Steve Daines, AFBF President Zippy Duvall, MFBF President Hans McPherson.



Jim Larsen visits with Congressman Greg Gianforte.



AFBF President Zippy Duvall and long-time MFBF member Earl Bricker.



Members enjoyed visiting vendors at the trade show.



The Pondera Players performing the entertaining play written by Mignon Quaw in 1919. The play's theme centered around technology on the farm and benefits of being a Farm Bureau member.

SPEAKERS/WORKSHOPS



Mary Heffernan of Five Marys Farms shared strategies for growing your ag business reaching consumers using social media.



At the Opening Session, keynote speaker Duane Martinz shared tips for success including writing down daily gratitudes.



Darla Tyler-McSherry encourages others to help prevent suicide by asking questions and being a good listener.



R J Karney, American Farm Bureau, noted in his broadband workshop that rural America need to be able to participate in a social society.



AFBF President Zippy Duvall and MFBF President Hans McPherson held a Fireside Chat at the Century Club Breakfast.



Bruce Vincent, Provider Pals, in his luncheon address that the real problem today is ignorance about the role of resource providers, noting that the public is ready for a new leader, and it's us.

MEDIA



To the MFBF membership:

1994 seems like so long ago and yet just yesterday. What a wonderful adventure this last 25 years! Getting hired over a beer at a pitchfork fondue, to my first annual convention in Lewistown and riding tricycles to the Gala event celebrating 100 years. From Christmas carols in June in Bigfork to wearing winter coats to golf in Red Lodge and 'hitting the birdie' from the tee — good times at many MFBF Summer Conferences. To all the exceptional members of the Montana Farm Bureau Federation I call friends and family, I say thank you from the bottom of my heart. I am honored and blessed knowing and working for you. May you continue the grand legacy that has been created and continue to grow from the 3,000 members then to 20,000 now.

Thanks for the great memories!

— Janet Krob

Lane Nordlund, Montana Ag Television, catches up with MFBF's Janet Krob regarding her retirement.



Zippy Duvall visits with Bill Schulze on Voices of Montana.



Colter Brown, Northern Ag Network, with AFBF President Zippy Duvall.



Randy Bogden, KMON Radio, talks ag issues with AFBF President Zippy Duvall.



Ken Johnson talks about trade and wheat farming with Aaron Flint on Montana Talks.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION



Tonya Dvarishkis, Montana Food Bank Network, accepts the donation of \$8300 from Montana Farm Bureau Young Farmer & Rancher Committee Chair Gil Gasper.



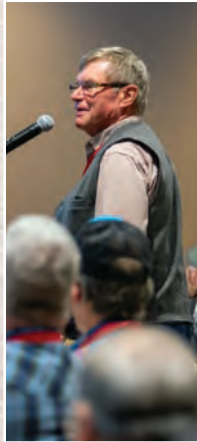
The Milton Ranch receives the inaugural Montana Leopold Conservation Award. Pictured are Stacy Barta, NRCS, Bill and Dana Milton and David Bailey, western director, Leopold Conservation Award® Program.

THE GALA



MFBF President Hans McPherson with wife, Suzanne, looking sharp at the Gala.

DELEGATE SESSION



Jay Meyer, Ravalli County, makes an important point on the delegate floor.



Voting delegates get ready to discuss and vote on MFBF policy for 2020.

THE GALA



Zippy Duvall opens his gift of an oversized gavel constructed by MFBF Vice President Cyndi Johnson while Hans McPherson looks on.



Everyone danced the night away with the Kyle Shobe and The Walk 'em Boys.

Discussion Meet Provides Great Competition, Learning...



Kyle Hoover, district retail manager Polaris, left, with Discussion Meet winner Rocky Forseth, center, and Chad Adams, Yellowstone Polaris.



YF&R Discussion Meet Competitors Rocky Forseth, Kim Gibbs, JM Peck and Mark Boyd.

Young Farmers and Rancher Discussion Meet

Rocky Forseth, a young rancher from Helena, bested three other competitors to win the Montana Farm Bureau Young Farmer and Rancher Discussion Meet. He got the keys to a Ranger® 570 EFI and an all-expense paid trip to compete in the national competition in Austin, TX in January. The three other contestants were Mark Boyd from Alder, Kim Gibbs from Miles City and J.M. Peck from Melrose. The Discussion Meet was held November 12 during the MFBF 100th Annual Convention in Billings with the winner being announced at MFBF's Centennial Celebration Gala the next evening.

Forseth, who is a member of the Lewis & Clark County Farm Bureau, said being involved in the Discussion Meet makes one realize Farm Bureau's value. "At the end of the day, the policy Farm

Bureau develops is the origin of everything agriculture is doing. Participating in the Discussion Meet is a great way to sharpen public speaking skills and drive the conversation towards action. This competition allows you to have difficult conversations and develop solutions to those challenges."

Forseth was thrilled and honored to win the Polaris UTV. "I want to thank all of the participating Montana Polaris dealers who feel so strongly about supporting Montana's Young Farmers and Ranchers. It's outstanding that they donate this amazing utility vehicle to the winner and I looked forward to using it at the ranch."



Sheridan Johnson, Collegiate Farm Bureau Discussion Meet winner, gives her closing statement on bridging the gap with consumers.

Collegiate Discussion Meet

Sheridan Johnson, a junior at Montana State University, was named winner of the 2019 MFBF Collegiate Discussion Meet. As winner, Johnson receives an all-expense paid trip to compete at the Young Farmer & Rancher National Conference March 16-18 in Louisville, KY.

Johnson, who was raised in a wheat farming and Farm Bureau family in Conrad, said she decided to participate in the Collegiate YF&R Discussion Meet because she saw it as an excellent way to build connections with other students.

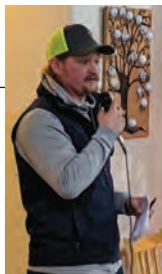
The ag communications/political science major encourages other students to participate in the Discussion Meet. "I recommend that other students get out of their comfort zones and try this. This competition creates an opportunity to practice at the collegiate level. It's important to realize it's a discussion where people can share ideas, it's not a debate. Plus, it's a great way to meet other students with a keen interest in agriculture."

COUNTY NEWS

Southwest Counties held a Christmas Party Dec 4 at the Dillon Golf Course. **Dawson-Wibaux** held a Christmas party December 15 at CC's Café in Glendive. **Cascade County** finalized their annual budget and Program of Work December 9. They are planning to visit all seven agents in their county to give them a Christmas bonus as a thank you. **Lewis and Clark County** held a Christmas Party and Program of Work/Annual Budget meeting Dec 11. **Hill-Liberty-Blaine** met to discuss bylaws and annual Program of Work. **Yellowstone County** held a board Christmas party Dec. 16 and **Meagher County** held a meeting Dec. 18.

Front Range Counties Farm Bureau is once again one of the hosts of the **Montana's Next Generation Conference** January 31 – February 1 in Shelby. This is a comprehensive conference of business management, succession planning and production workshops. The event kicks off Jan. 31 with a talk on the promise and perils ahead for the world's farmers and ranchers to feed another 2 billion people by 2050. For more information and registration, visit mtnextgen.com and follow the Facebook page for updates, giveaways, and speaker profiles.

Chouteau County President **Jess Bandel** held an informative ag event November 25 at River View Elementary in Great Falls where kids had the opportunity to learn all about wheat farming.



Southwest Counties President JM Peck gets the Christmas party off to a festive start.



(Above) Students at River View Elementary had the unique opportunity to check out a big red tractor. (Left) The third-grade class examines how wheat is ground into flour and turned into tasty bread.



"Because of my commitment through the ACE program to increase ag education, I kept talking to the teachers and principal at my daughter's elementary school to see if I could talk about agriculture to the students. Finally, I got the green light," said Bandel. Torgerson's generously brought over a tractor which was parked in front of the school. All grades were welcome to check out the immense red tractor. "Back in the classroom, we visited with 65 kids in the third-grade class about wheat, what it does and what it's used for. I ran a video that showed everything from seeding to rolling to harvest," Bandel said. "In addition, each kid got to act as a 'combine', smashing a head of wheat and pulling the kernels out. We ran some of our wheat through a grinder, made flour and from that, made bread and chocolate chip cookies in the crockpot so it was ready to eat later in the day."



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Recent Memorials

Foundation Memorials

Montana Farm Bureau Foundation receives a number of memorial donations to recognize departed members. What an appropriate way to remember someone to whom Farm Bureau has been an important part of their lives. This charitable remembrance perpetuates their belief in the future of agriculture. Next time you ponder how to express your appreciation for a friend or acquaintance who has passed away, consider a memorial that promotes agriculture and will have a meaningful impact.

Chouteau County Farm Bureau ...In memory of Alan Larson

Lew and Sarah Zimmer ...In memory of Dan Mortag

Rebecca Colnar and Casey Mott ...In memory of John (Jack) Bailey

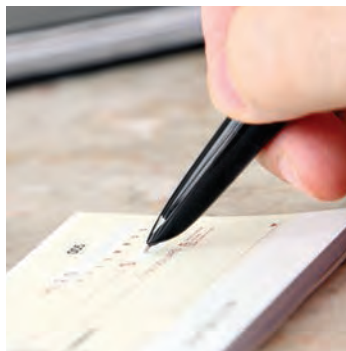
Tom and Sherri Cunningham ...In memory of Bruce Yanzick

Tom and Sherri Cunningham ...In memory of John (Jack) Bailey

For more MFB Foundation information visit <https://mfbf.org/foundation/> or contact Scott Kulbeck, 406-587-3153, scottk@mfbf.org.



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NOTE! PAY 2020 DUES

This is the last Montana Farm Bureau Spokesman you will receive if your 2020 dues are not paid. Don't know for sure? Call 406.587.3153 or log in to your MFBF account at <https://mfbf.org/user/login> to check your membership status. If you haven't previously logged onto your account, click on "Don't have a login? Create one." Link below the "Log In" button. From there, you can easily renew your dues if not current.

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Women's Leadership Committee

“100 Years. Then and Now”

2019 PHOTO CONTEST

The **Montana Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee Photo Contest** was held during the **MFBF Annual Convention November 11-14, 2019** in downtown Billings. Photos were judged by online vote on the MFBF Facebook page prior to the convention and were on display/voted on at convention.



2019 Photo Contest Winners:

1ST PLACE: Stephanie Plymale, Townsend

2ND PLACE: Stephanie Plymale, Townsend

3RD PLACE: Karli Johnson, Choteau

FARM BUREAU PEOPLE'S CHOICE:

Corey Enders, Decker

Montana Farm Bureau elects officers during annual convention

Hans McPherson, a diversified farmer from Stevensville, was re-elected as president of the Montana Farm Bureau Federation during the organization's annual convention Nov. 11-14 in Billings.

Cyndi Johnson, a Conrad small grains farmer, was re-elected as vice president.

Newly elected to the board were: **Kris Descheemaeker**, District 3, a cattle rancher from Lewistown; **Joy DePuydt**, District 7, a cattle rancher from Saco; and **Ed Bandel**, District 8, a wheat farmer from Floweree.

Re-elected to the MFBF Board of Directors were **Craig Blevins**, District 1, a cattle rancher from Ronan; District 5, **Gary Heibertshausen**, a sheep rancher from Alzada; and **Scott Stoner**, District 9, a horse rancher from Helena.

Carla Lawrence from Boyd was newly elected as the MFBF Women's Leadership Committee Chair. **Gil Gasper** from Circle was re-elected as the MFBF Young Farmer and Rancher Chair.

Following are the district chairs for the Women's Leadership Committee and the Young Farmer and Rancher Committee.

Women's Leadership Committee:

- District 2: Marti Shields, Dillon;
Rhonda Boyd, Alder
- District 4: Lisa McFarland, Billings;
Carla Lawrence, Boyd
- District 6: Michelle Gibbs, Circle;
Tracy Gasper, Circle
- District 8: Joy DePuydt, Saco
- District 10: Carole Plymale, Townsend;
Haley Goodall, Three Forks

Young Farmer/Rancher Committee:

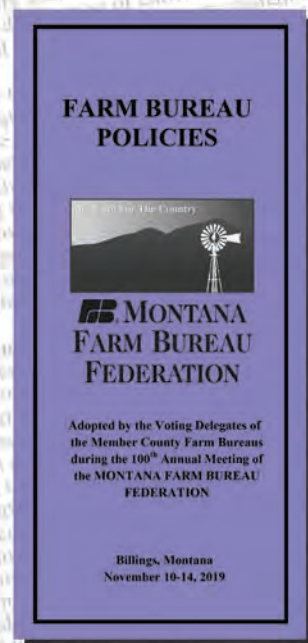
- District 2: Mark Boyd, Alder;
JM Peck, Melrose
- District 4: Zach Weimortz, Fromberg;
Jacob Stenberg, McLeod
- District 5: Fiona Mott, Miles City
- District 6: Michelle Gibbs, Tracy Gasper
- District 7: John Walker, Nashua
- District 8: Shay Richter, Fort Benton;
Todd Standley, Cascade
- District 10: Caitlin Boyd, Wilsall;
Brady Richardson White
Sulphur Springs

Race to the Conference

Plan now to attend the **National YF&R Conference** held **March 13-16 in Louisville, KY**. The bi-annual event brings more than 1200 young farmers and ranchers together from across the country. The conference offers specific, action-item focused sessions that provide attendees with knowledge they can take back and apply to their own operations and daily lives. You'll leave the conference with new friends, new ideas and new energy for your farm/ranch and Farm Bureau. Don't miss this conference that is especially tailored for the young agriculturalist. **Scholarship applications—deadline January 15**— are available at www.mfbf.org/foundation. For more details contact Sue Ann Streufert at sueanns@mfbf.org or call 406-587-3153.



MFBF Policy Book Online!



To read up on all the latest Montana Farm Bureau policies, go to www.mfbf.org/policy-advocacy and look for the Policy Book button. You may also call the state office at 406-587-3153 to request a copy of the 2020 Policy Book.

Lakota Lore:

“A Compendium of Thoughts and Knowledge of the Dakota Nation” — By Mark Lewing

REVIEWED BY REBECCA COLNAR

As editor of the *Spokesman*, and generally the person who reviews the books, it's always interesting to read the tomes written by our members. From little-known Montana history to cowboy tales to organic farming, the topics run the gamut of life in Montana. The latest book to cross my desk has been *Lakota Lore* by Northwest Counties Farm Bureau member Mark Lewing.

Lewing, a lifelong woodsman, hunter and outdoorsman, has always been intrigued by Native Americans whether through books read as a young man, friends, work, marriage and relationships. *Lakota Lore* was created so others could learn some basics about the Lakota Nation. It's easy to read and the chapters explain all of those fascinating and complicated Lakota customs and legends.

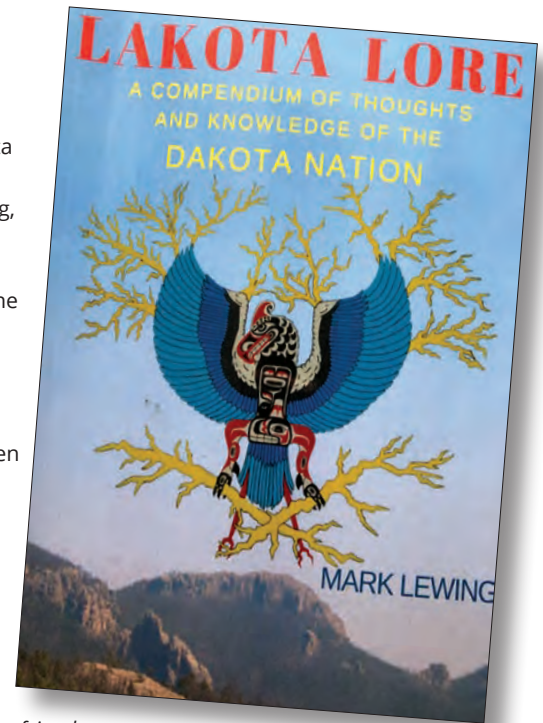
The chapter names are simple: The Beginning. Mythology. Legend. White Buffalo Cow Woman. Circles. Community Life, to name a few. It contains 40 photographs with explanations of sites

strategic to Lakota history as well as photos of clothing, tipis, saddles, parfleches and more. This isn't the type of book you necessarily have to read in order of chapters. It's fascinating to open it up to a chapter and just start reading.

For instance, one interesting paragraph about life in camp; *When the tipi door was open, friends usually walked right in. If it was closed, they would rattle the door covering, call out or cough to announce their presence and wait for the invitation to enter. Two sticks crossed over the door meant either the owners were away or wanted privacy. If they were gone away the sticks would be crossed, the door cover tied securely and the smoke flaps crossed over the smoke hole. This indicated the door was locked and thus as secure as a bolted door on a house today.*

"I have long felt that it was up to me to spark the interest [in Native American history] and so have compiled this document to pass along to my children and especially my grandchildren and great grandchildren since the passage of time seems to erode these things," Lewing says in the Preface. He notes that there is an old Lakota proverb says, "A people without history is like wind in the buffalo grass."

The 180-page softcover will be of interest to anyone who wants to learn about the horses, homes, community life, customs and tales of the Lakota people who are so prevalent in Montana history.



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The book is available for \$19.95 directly from Mark Lewing at 406-207-1270 or horses@msn.com. (\$3.00 shipping.) It is available on-line from Amazon in soft cover or ebook, Barnes & Noble as an ebook as well as the University of Montana bookstore, Valley Drug or Beverly's Books & Antiques in Stevensville, Chapter One in Hamilton, Fact or Fiction Bookstore in Missoula and some local history visitor centers.



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Congratulations to Rocky Forseth of Helena for earning top honors in the 2019 MFBF YF&R Discussion Meet. Rocky is a proud owner of a new Polaris Ranger 570!

A huge thank you to our participating Polaris dealers!

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Kurt's Polaris - Missoula
Lewistown Honda & Polaris - Lewistown
Montana Power Products - Ronan
Redline Sports, Inc - Butte
Riverside Marine and Cycle - Miles City
Sports City Cyclery - Great Falls
Yellowstone Polaris - Billings



For more information on the YF&R Program and how to get involved, go to www.mfbf.org or contact Sue Ann Streufert at sueanns@mfbf.org, (406) 587-3153.