

SUMMER 2017

 MONTANA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

Spokesman

WE CARE FOR THE COUNTRY



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MEMBERSHIP
MEMBERSHIP**

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EARN FARM
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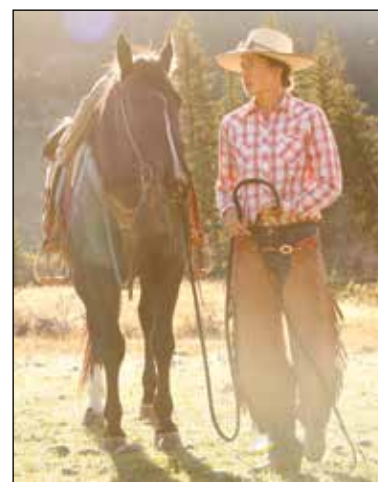
MONTANA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

WE CARE FOR THE COUNTRY

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Jennie Anderson on the ranch.
Photo by Laura Nelson.

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Hans McPherson
President, Montana Farm
Bureau Federation

“Montana Farm Bureau Federation sponsors educational opportunities locally, regionally and state wide on a variety of subjects. Every time we have a meeting or convention, the continuing education opportunities are top notch.”

Membership, membership, membership

The FFA creed that I learned in 1967 started out: “I believe in the future of farming with a faith born not of words but of deeds; achievements won by present and past generations.” Today, I believe in the future of Montana Farm Bureau because of the past and present generations. As with any organization, Montana Farm Bureau Federation depends on continued membership growth to survive the present and move into the future. I believe Montana Farm Bureau Federation offers great value to our members and we continually look for ways to improve and deliver even greater value.

Look at a few of these benefits. To me, first and foremost is time because Farm Bureau is on the job lobbying in all political arenas. Because of their work in Helena and Washington, D.C., I have more time to keep farming. I would never be able to accomplish what Farm Bureau does on my behalf. Montana Farm Bureau's efforts during this past legislative session were exemplary, fighting to see that the will of our policy book was represented well in Helena. Our lobbyists killed many bills that would negatively impact agriculture in Montana and ensured the good bills were passed to continue to protect our way of life. This effort also continues year-round with our congressional delegation in Washington D.C.

Montana Farm Bureau gets involved locally by reaching out to county commissioners and others on our members' behalf as well as intervening in numerous local lawsuits.

Montana Farm Bureau Federation sponsors educational opportunities locally, regionally and state wide on a variety of subjects. Every time we have a meeting or convention, the continuing education opportunities are top notch. In addition, our Montana Farm Bureau Foundation offers grants and several scholarships. Remember that a Farm Bureau membership saves you money by offering

discounts on everything from hardware to hotels, making membership in the Farm Bureau an excellent investment for anyone in agriculture whether you are young or old, have a large ranch or small farm.

So why aren't more of our neighbors and friends rushing to our door to join an organization that offers all of these benefits and ultimately affect their bottom line? The answer is quite simple: no one asked them!

Here is your opportunity. The leadership of Montana Farm Bureau and staff are putting together a series of old-fashioned membership drives. Remember I said I believed in the future because of the past? Well, this is how past generations did it and as we are fast approaching our hundredth anniversary, we should get back to our roots! Soon many counties will be asked to organize an old-fashioned membership drive. Leaders and staff will be available to join with local volunteers to conduct a membership blitz, so be prepared. District directors and regional managers will soon be contacting you, so please support them as we reach out to help you and your county reach their goals.

What can individuals do if they want to get started immediately? Start by familiarizing yourself with our new webpage, then talk to fellow farmers and ranchers about the benefits of membership. Take them to the webpage, www.mfbf.org, and ask them to sign up. Another simple thing is to wear Farm Bureau clothing that lets everyone know that you are a proud member of the Montana Farm Bureau. You'll be surprised how many people are familiar—and love—what we do, they just need to be asked to join.

Good luck and good membershiping. Let's make this year a drive to remember! Thank you in advance.



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A government of the people, by the people and for the people

The 65th Montana Legislature is finally in the books. For agricultural concerns, it was a relatively uneventful session, a far different gathering than the 2015 session. In my 26 years of attending the legislature it seemed that fewer bills were introduced, due mainly to the fact that there was no money available. Any legislation that required money was put on the back burner and in many cases not introduced. Infrastructure continued to garner the majority of attention as legislators failed to reach agreement on how projects should be funded and which projects should be funded. The gas tax increase was pared back significantly and phased in over several years. Preliminary figures indicate that there should be enough money to meet the federal match for highway dollars. The problem with this approach is that cities and counties will receive little increase of funding during the first years. There is talk of a special session to address infrastructure funding.

Before a special session is called, the question "What is infrastructure?" needs to be addressed. When I think of infrastructure, I envision roads and bridges. When my friends in small rural communities think of infrastructure they think of water and sewer projects that are too expensive for the local community budget to absorb. My kids who are teachers see infrastructure as new school buildings; college administrators see infrastructure as building or remodeling facilities on campus. Folks who are irrigators see refurbishment of outdated and failing

irrigation dams and canals. Phone and internet companies see infrastructure as new fiber optics and facilities. The list could go on forever. Before we call the legislators back to Helena, the list needs to be pared down. We cannot fund all projects and folks should have some idea what is on the table before the lawmakers get to town. It has long been observed that there are few opponents to funding legislation in the appropriation committee which leave the burden on the legislators to determine priorities for the limited funds available.

After twenty five years working the legislature I have noticed a shift in attitudes among some legislators. There was a time not many years ago when legislators listened to opinions of constituents and representatives of the various organizations representing those constituents and gave them credence before casting their votes. More and more often there is an attitude that that once someone is elected, they instantly become the experts on almost any subject. As I stated above, legislators have always recognized that they have to make the decisions but in the end they serve the people that elected them. I fear that we are starting to see a political elitism, both in Congress and our state legislatures, wherein the people are there to serve the government. As Abraham Lincoln stated, "Ours is a government of the people, for the people and by the people." It is up to us as voting Americans to make sure we adhere to that tenant.



John Youngberg
Executive Vice President, MFBF

“... legislators have always recognized that they have to make the decisions but in the end they serve the people that elected them.”





Zippy Duvall
President, American Farm
Bureau Federation

“Thanks to the hard work of U.S. agriculture, our safe and affordable food supply is the envy of the world.”

From Farm to **Shining Sea**

You'll be hard pressed to find folks with more patriotic spirit than America's farmers and ranchers. We love this country and take great pride in working around the clock to grow the finest products in the world. From sea to shining sea, farmers know firsthand the beauty of our nation's prairies, forests, valleys and plains, because that's where our "offices" are. For many of us, our families have been farming and ranching in our communities for decades—and even centuries—long before housing developments began to spring up. A good day in American agriculture brings millions of jobs and nutritious meals to our nation.

Most Americans enjoying their Fourth of July cookout probably didn't give much thought to where the meal came from. They don't have to worry about whether the meat is safe to eat or whether there's enough corn-on-the-cob. Thanks to the hard work of U.S. agriculture, our safe and affordable food supply is the envy of the world. But that wouldn't be possible without strong and supportive policies and programs and common-sense regulations that give farmers and ranchers the flexibility they need to manage their businesses—and stay in business. As farmers, we know what's at stake, and we have an added responsibility to protect the freedoms we need to preserve both our livelihood and our nation's food security.

We've faced some tough battles on the road to regulatory reform. Agriculture has come together with one voice to call for common-sense reform, and I'm proud of the progress we've made. We must remember though that we haven't reached our destination just yet. You can be sure that our team in Washington

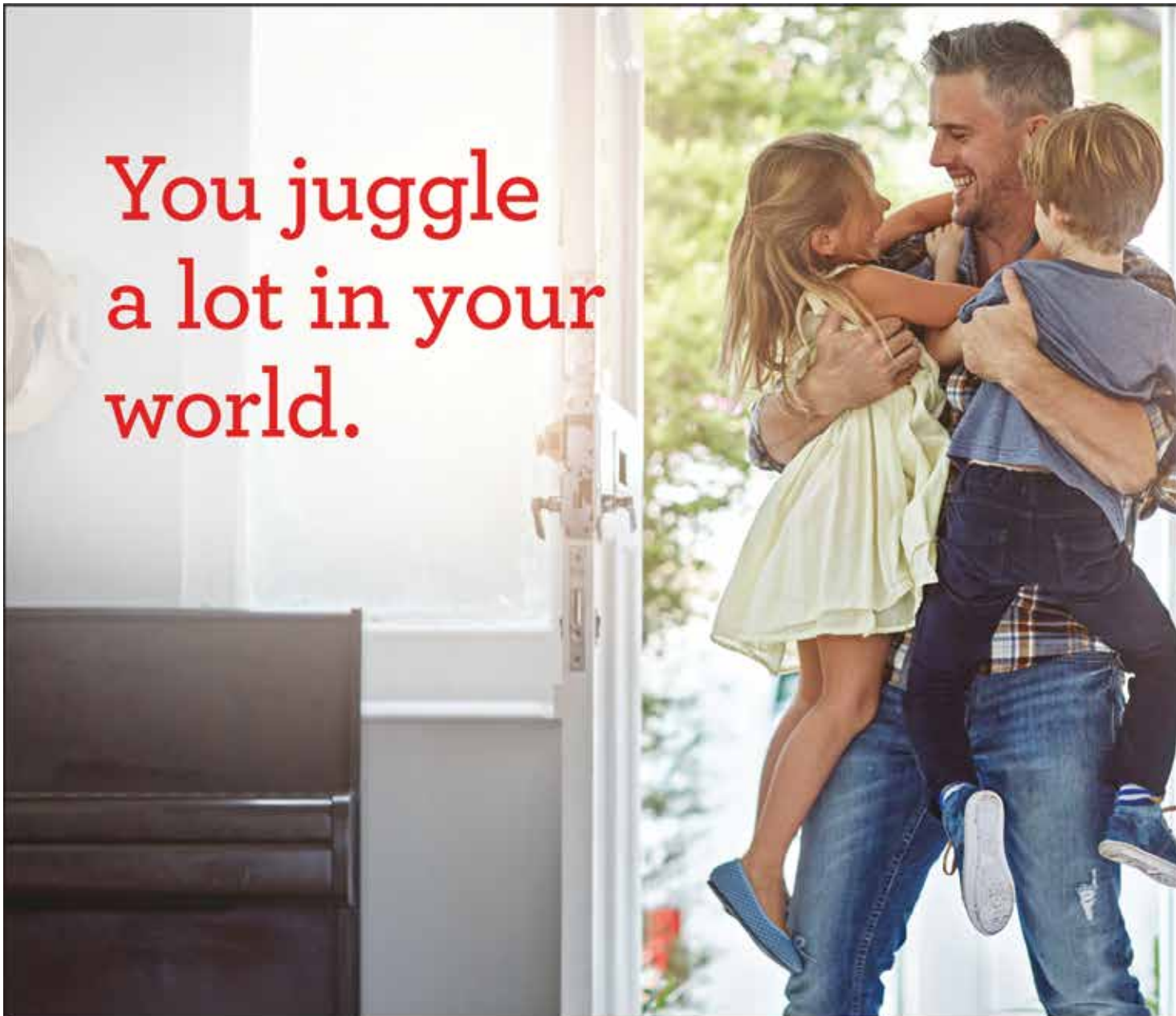
will continue to fight until the reforms we need are law, but lawmakers still need to hear from each of you on how these regulations affect your livelihood. Farmers and ranchers often get labeled as "anti-regulation" when we call out what's not working in our system. In fact, we're for common-sense regulation. Keeping our water and air clean makes good sense and is a top priority for agriculture. In fact, farmers have cut environmental impacts in half across major crops, while production has increased, thanks to strides in technology and innovation backed by our innate ethic of stewardship.

Finally, if farmers and ranchers are going to have the freedom to do what we do best, we need a robust 2018 farm bill. There's lots of talk in Washington these days of trimming the fat, but farm programs are about as lean as they come. Farmers and ranchers care about fiscal responsibility and we know how to stretch a dollar. Farm bill spending is an investment in the security of our nation's food supply and the 21 million jobs agriculture supports. Tools like crop insurance can make the difference for a farmer struggling to hold on through a tough season or to secure a loan to get the next crop in. Anyone who still thinks the farm bill is about handouts has never met a farmer. America's farmers and ranchers are some of the most innovative, hard-working people our country produces.

I can't help but be overcome with thankfulness to live in a nation that celebrates liberty and opportunity for all. The freedoms we enjoy in our country were not easily won, and it's the solemn duty of every citizen to protect those privileges for the next generation.



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discuss what's been happening in your world.**



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Mariah Shammel making memories with her family during the summer.

Summer Lovin'

BY MARIAH SHAMMEL

Summertime—the stuff that memories are made of. I don't think I've ever met anyone who doesn't look forward to this time of year. The stifling temperatures can be a hard sell for some people but between the barbecues, vacations, and school being out, there's something in it for everyone.

When I was a kid growing up in Minnesota, I lived for summer. It meant I could strap my rollerblades on, skate my way to the lake down the road and spend all day with my friends, splashing around and eating popsicles whenever the mood struck us. While going to high school in Billings, I couldn't wait for summer because it meant freedom! After a long day of work at the Experiment Station, my friends and I would pile into one of our so-not-fancy-cars, hit the Dairy Queen, cruise 24th Street while singing along to old country tunes on the radio, hoping to run into whoever our crush of the month was and eventually screech home before curfew.

These days, I still look forward to summer but now it's for different reasons—no school means not having to drive to town three times a week, nice weather means the clothesline can

give my dryer a break, I get to spend my mornings sipping tea as I weed the garden and watch the kids run around the yard playing "Pirate Ship" in their pajamas, and of course the barbecue takes center stage, which means Favorite Farmer gets to be head cook (when he's home, that is).

That's not to say that summer doesn't get busy, because let me tell you, it gets downright crazy around here (I'm pretty sure I say that about every season and everything we do). Right now it's the calm before the storm. We're heading off for a much-needed Shammel Family vacation to the Oregon Coast but when we get back, we'll be jumping into haying and hauling cows head first...with no life jacket to speak of.

Before I know it, I'll be dreaming about the last day of haying and the last day of harvest and praying that a big rainstorm hits July 3 so the entire family unit can celebrate the Stars and Stripes together. When temps start to rise, I fantasize about the fair coming to town, which really means I salivate over all the fair food and once again pray for a moisture-gathering storm of some kind (except anything that would damage our crops, of course) so that Favorite Farmer can enjoy the

festivities without having to think about the hay that's ready to bale back at the ranch.

Summer certainly has a different meaning to it now that I'm married to the crops and the cows and we have three little kiddos to keep track of but thankfully, that doesn't mean we don't have a blast doing what we do, even if some people call it work. I could probably count on one hand the amount of times Favorite Farmer will eat at our table throughout the entire haying season (which ends up being about five weeks when it's all said and done) but that just means we get to have a lot of picnics in the field! He may not be able to join us on camping trips every weekend but who says the kids and I can't sneak off and meet my sister and her kids at the Lewis & Clark Caverns or join my parents for a fossil-digging venture in the Badlands? We aren't able to hit the pool every day or walk to the neighbors' barbecue across the street but a slide with a kiddie pool at the bottom is a pretty good time and when the neighbors around here let loose at a spur-of-the-moment "Haying's Over" shindig, let's just say we kind of know how to par-tay.

Yep, I've come a long way since the summers of my childhood—I think I have one pair of shorts in my closet, and that's just to pay homage to my fashionable, look how cute I used to dress when people actually saw me, days. I still wear flip-flops but usually forget I'm wearing them when I deliver harvest meals and come back with gouges in my feet where chaff poked through.

Whether you grow up surrounded by houses or cows, every summer that passes is in some ways a rite of passage. A lot of monumental events happen during the dog days of summer—learning to ride your bike for the first time, getting your driver's license, having your heart broken, being grounded for being somewhere you weren't supposed to be. Whatever summer memories your mind conjures up, you probably have some filled with fondness and some you'd like to forget, some you can't wait to tell your kids about...and some you'll take to your grave with nary a word being said to anyone except your best friend who just happened to be there but she pinky swore she wouldn't tell a soul. I mean, that's what some people tell me happens, anyway. Oh, summertime—the stuff that memories are made of.



Only you can prevent **water damage**

Water damage claims are very destructive and costly. Insurance is there to protect you but can't bring back the irreplaceable items you treasure. It is even worse when the items are destroyed due to our own lack of maintenance and care.

Five examples of preventable claims and tips to avoid having the losses.

1 Washing machine hoses are exposed to fluctuating temperatures, movement from the machines and just normal wear and tear. A damaged hose can spill hundreds of gallons of water an hour which can cause extensive damage and raise your water bill. Best Prevention Tips: inspect frequently, investigate water on the floor, replace with steel jacketed hoses and replace the hoses every five years.

2 Bath, shower and sink back splashes grout and edges are very susceptible to cracking and decay. Best Prevention Tips: Ensure the shower door or curtain is closed when water is on. Frequently inspect and test the grout

by placing a few drops on dry grout and if it soaks in-replace. Most contractors recommend at least once a year the seal be re-sealed to prevent damage.

3 Toilet Leaks not only cause a lot of damage but are inconvenient. Check for water around the base of the toilet or wobbling of the toilet. Toilet leaks left un-repaired will cause damage to the floor and sub-floors. Best Prevention Tips: Any sign of leaking- investigate the cause.

4 Refrigerator and Dishwasher Leaks are usually more difficult to detect since the lines are at the back or bottom of the unit. Damage caused by leakage from these pipes is intensified by the enclosed heat from the refrigerator or dishwasher motor. An additional factor on refrigerators is water on the floor is more common now with units that have ice and water taps. Best Practices Tips: Check lines for kinks and anytime you move the unit, be cautious to not kink the lines. Consistent water on the floor should be investigated.

5 Hot Water Heater leaks are the

majority of the time a slow leak that occurs over a longer period of time. Signs to look for possible leaking are water is not as hot; heater makes cracking or popping sounds; metallic taste in your hot water or a puddle forming around the unit. Best Practice Tips: Flush your water heater once a year to remove sediment and more often if your water source has high mineral content. Pay attention to the signs above and do a regular inspection.

6 Consider water monitor alarms which are small alarms that can detect

water and will sound like a smoke detector if water is present.

They are inexpensive and will let you know quickly when there is a suspected leak.


Place them near water use appliances and under sinks. Water alarms are available at most hardware stores.



Expect the Unexpected

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Meet **Lee Boyer**

BY REBECCA COLNAR

- District 4: Yellowstone, Sweet Grass and Carbon-Stillwater and Big Horn County Farm Bureaus
- Lives in Bridger, MT
- Retired August 2013

When Montana farmers and ranchers talk about international trade, there's a good chance Lee Boyer played some part in promoting Montana ag products overseas. Boyer grew up on a diversified farm in Bridger, and attended Montana State University where he earned a degree in agriculture. He spent a few years managing a grain elevator in Shelby but then changed course spending 10 years managing Home Center building supply stores. However, in 1986 he had the opportunity to work for the Montana Department of Agriculture.

"During that time, I wore many different hats," noted Boyer who was elected as District 4 Director at the Montana Farm Bureau Convention in 2016. "I was the grain warehouse auditor, I ran the agriculture finance program which made

ag loans to 4H and FFA kids. In 1992 I became Bureau Chief, which allowed me to oversee state hail insurance, ag finance and ag marketing. We worked with check-off programs for cherries, pulse crops, potatoes, and alfalfa seed. These were check-offs that producers voted in themselves to support marketing and research on those commodities. I served as the liaison between those commodities and the Montana Department of Agriculture."

The marketing arm provided assistance for international trade for Montana producers. "We took a group of Farm Bureau and Stockgrower members to Canada to visit cattle packers and feedlots. It was during the time the North American Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was starting so we could see what that impact was. A couple years after, in

1997, we took Farm Bureau people to Saskatchewan to look at pulse crops and the potential for Montana producers. I oversaw the marketing staff when they traveled to Argentina and Brazil to promote Montana products, and when they traveled to Japan to promote beef."

One area Boyer was especially instrumental in was ag finance. "We worked with a lot of youth providing ag loans, and with the assistance of the Extension Agents had an impact on the Fort Belknap and Blackfoot reservations. Some of those young people went on to have their own ranches. It was great to see those successes. In addition, I served as president of the National Association of the Rural Rehabilitation Corporation. This is an association of states with rural rehabilitation corporations with ag lending programs that were originally established



Sarah and Lee Boyer at their ranch in Bridger.

in 1934. Every state had a rehabilitation corporation, and dollars were used for the ag finance."

Another program Boyer cited as a Department of Agriculture success was the Young Ag Couples Conference. "I oversaw about 22 of those. MFBF District Director Tom DePuydt and his wife, Joy, are graduates; as are Susan and Jack Lake and Lesley Robinson, who ran for Lieutenant Governor last fall with Greg Gianforte. Many young people who attend that program became leaders. Of course, Montana Farm Bureau plays a large role in the Young Ag Leadership Conference (YALC) and that, too, is an excellent educational meeting for young people involved in agriculture."

Boyer served as director and president of the National Council of State Ag Finance Programs and was a founding member of the Montana FFA Foundation.

Boyer explained he had been a member of the FFA in high school, and when he saw the many ag loans the Department did for FFA kids, he "realized what a great vehicle it is for

young people to learn speaking skills and leadership. When I was there I didn't see that potential. I wanted to focus on kids who weren't state officers. We laid the groundwork and now it's going great."

He became familiar with Farm Bureau through his work over years with the Department, and had served in leadership roles with the Carbon/Stillwater County Farm Bureau. "Sarah and I thought Farm Bureau was a great mix of farmers and ranchers and fit us well. When you work for state government, you have to serve everyone. But now by serving as District 4 Director, I feel I can give back to the ag community. I believe Farm Bureau is the right vehicle to further agriculture."

Boyer sees one of the greatest challenges to agriculture is that farmers and ranchers are a minority with most consumers generations removed from the family farm. "There is no understanding of how food is produced anymore. I think countering it with bloggers and ag advocacy groups is the best way to inform people about what you do on your farm

and ranch."

Another challenge is property rights. "I don't think your average American citizen driving down the interstate understands that those beautiful fields are private property. There is a disconnect of people who don't realize those fields are the farmer's back yard. Our system works so well because of private property, and we need people to make that connection. Just because a ranch is there doesn't mean people can head across it to state land."

Boyer credits Farm Bureau as the top group for educating consumers on where food comes from as well as having a voice. "It is important to belong to Farm Bureau because it's all encompassing. People say they are too busy to attend meetings, but if you don't go to meetings, you won't have anything to be busy on. We need members to participate and bring us ideas and concerns. It's important to bring those networks of support. Don't be an island."

In his spare time, Boyer enjoys woodworking, building "things" and traveling.





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Insurance, FFA important to agent

Warren Krone

BY REBECCA COLNAR

Warren Krone is no stranger to agriculture. He grew up on a ranch in Roundup and was heavily involved in FFA in high school. At Northwest College in Powell, he was on the livestock judging team, and following college he worked in the feed business before moving on to become an agent for Mountain West Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company.

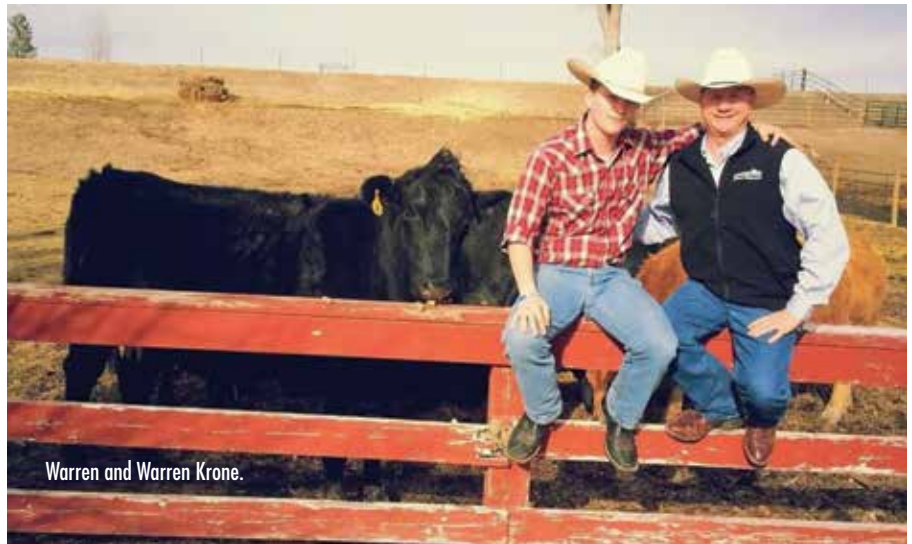
"Becoming involved with Mountain West probably started when Larry French, a Mountain West agent from Powell, presented me with the Outstanding Student



“Becoming involved with Mountain West probably started when Larry French presented me with the Outstanding Student of the Year Award.”

of the Year Award. Larry told me, "Let me know when it's time for you to change your career." "So 21 years ago, I made the change to become an agent," says Krone.

Krone remains happy with that decision. "It's similar to being a feed salesman because it's one of those jobs where you still get to knock on doors, visit ranchers



Warren and Warren Krone.



face to face, and business is still done with a handshake. Farm Bureau is the number-one insurance company for farmers and ranchers. We are one of the few insurance companies who actually go out to visit with our customers and do annual reviews."

Krone's personal story tells of why he recognizes the importance of insurance. "My dad died when I was five years old, and we had zero life insurance. It made things really hard. I made the decision I would never let that happen to my family, and my goal is to ensure it doesn't happen to anyone else's family. One of my mentors said that the three greatest occupations are preaching, teaching and life insurance. (Farming and ranching, too!). I've always held onto that."

His advice to insureds: Have an annual review with your agent. "Do a check up on your insurance. Look at your life insurance and annuities, review if you cover enough liability on your place. That's huge. It's inexpensive to add a million-dollar umbrella to your policy."

He appreciates the work of the Montana Farm Bureau Federation. "We are a grassroots organization of farmers and ranchers. What I've found really exciting is over the past 20 years since I've been involved, our membership is getting

younger. There is an optimism and that is encouraging. It's important to involve young farmers and ranchers. What life insurance can do is plan to keep the family farm in the family with business succession planning."

Krone's children have been involved in agricultural pursuits. Son, Warren, was the first ever elected state FFA officer from Great Falls. Like his father, he attended Northwest College where he was president of the FFA, and has moved over to Montana State University. Daughter Amanda has worked for Krone since she was in junior high school, and serves as a sales associate in his office. In 2017 she qualified for her first All American as an associate agent. Warren has been married to his wife Michelle for 27 years.

Because of his belief in the blue jacket, Krone spends a lot of time helping the Electric City FFA, especially with livestock judging and has sponsored the DeKalb Award for Outstanding Ag Student.

The Krone family has a small herd of cows, and when Krone isn't helping the FFA or helping on the ranch, he enjoys seasonal activities including archery, hunting, ice fishing, and horn hunting. "I love the outdoors."

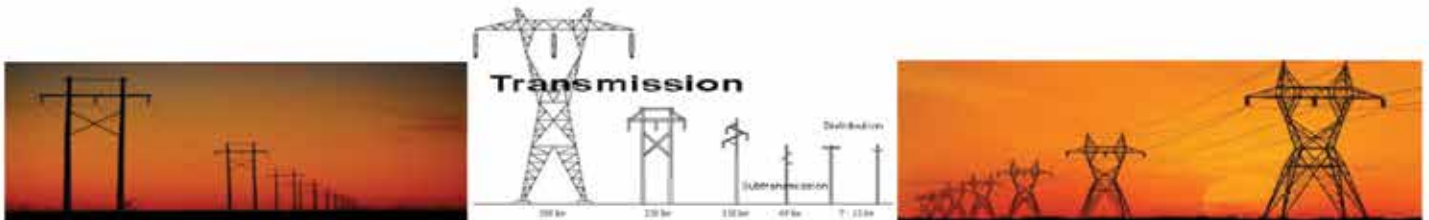




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MONTANA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

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Fairmont Hot Springs is a favorite of Montana Farm Bureau for members. This year more than 150 members gathered to learn more about innovations in farming, hear latest on animal health and hold committee meetings.

Workshops and Committee Meetings



Stan Weaver, Weaver Quarter Horses, shares industry updates with the Equine Committee.



Tax Committee: Gina Stevens listens to Bob Story cover tax questions in the next legislative sessions.



Thomas Boos, Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator, Fish, Wildlife and Parks, visits with members following his informative talk.



Montana Department of Agriculture Director Ben Thomas interviews with Northern Ag Network and Russell Nemetz.



Sarah Brown Dirkes, AFBF, describes her role working with food companies.

"Summer Nights" – A Foundation Fundraiser

The Montana Farm Bureau Foundation grossed more than \$15,000 from their "Summer Nights." There was an auction for District baskets, "head and tails" 50-50 raffle, a golf Calcutta and several other auction items. A photo booth provided a great way for folks to get a formal picture.



The "Heads and Tails" fundraiser had maximum participation.



Cathy McDowell and Darcia Patten check out the Auction offerings.

Tours

Thursday's tours included stops at the Clark Fork River Reclamation Project, Red Eye Rodeo Stock Contractor and the historic Grant-Kohrs Ranch.



Kaehl Berg, Red Eye Rodeo, shares his thoughts on being a rodeo contractor including providing everything for a rodeo but the announcer and the funnyman.



Jules Marchesseault, Theo Yanzick, Lee Boyer and Rhonda Johnston hear about the river clean up that started in 2012 on the Lampert Ranch. Restoration includes removing mine tailings, planting vegetation and restoring the river banks.

ACE Training

Before the meetings were underway Tuesday, American Farm Bureau's Johnna Miller conducted a training for the ACE (Advocate, Communicate, Educate) Team. The focus was on doing an interview with the media and establishing good relationships with reporters.



Pictured is Chele Harrington on a mock interview.



Ken Johnson at the blacksmith's shop at the Grant-Kohrs Ranch.



Team Streit with Chelcie Cargill, Cyndi Johnson and Jill and Tyler Streit.



The winning team from Ravalli County.

Golfing

Farm Bureau members and insurance agents enjoy friendly competition at the Foundation Golf Scramble.



Dean and Julie Reddig, Valley County Farm Bureau, in the photo booth.



Wyatt Kempf enjoys the S'mores Bar.



Young Ranchers Show Resilience Despite Tough Challenges

William and Justine Kougl ranching in Kirby.

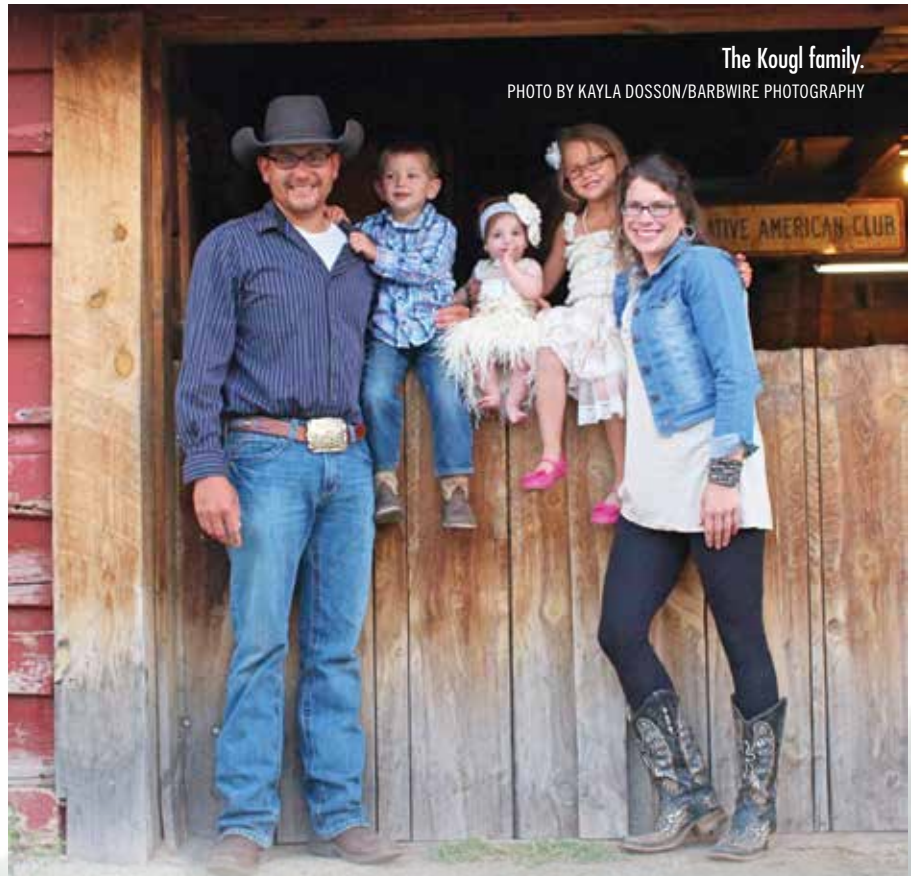
BY REBECCA COLNAR

Justine and William Kougl exemplify fortitude. In the relatively short time this young couple has been together, they have experienced the trials and tribulations of moving to a different state, a generational transition of a ranch, a house fire that destroyed everything and having a special needs child.

It all started when Justine and William met at South Dakota State University. Although Justine was raised in the rodeo world and was around horses, she wasn't a rancher. William grew up on the family ranch in Timber Lake, South Dakota. While Justine was earning a Master's Degree in economics, William was studying range management and plant science.

"I figured I'd find work in an urban area," admits Justine, who noted that even though her path led her to ranching, her degree is a good fit. "While William is working with the land, I handle the books, business and banking. I run a tight budget! We both know each other's strengths and weaknesses which makes a good team."

When the Kougl family, including William's parents, were looking to expand their ranch, they needed to cast a wide net. "Everything in South Dakota was being pushed more towards farming, so land prices were up," Williams explains. He and his father, Albert, found the ranch that sits



west of Kirby and purchased it in 2013. Justine was working in Timber Lake and never saw the ranch prior to purchase, but helped with the financing process. "We

worked with our bank in South Dakota and gave them information on our cash flow and how to make the payment work. We purchased the ranch near our son's first

birthday. We joke that he got a ranch for his birthday," chuckles Justine.

They had only been in their new location for several months when they awoke to the smell of something burning. "I knew it was a different smell than a wood stove. We came out and our ceiling was on fire," explained William. "We scooped up the kids, kicked open the door and got into a vehicle. It was below 0. We called our neighbor who lives several miles down the creek. Although the house was a total loss—the only thing left of it was the metal roof—at least the fire department was able to save the outbuildings."

“Horses are a lifeline for the ranch, because of the terrain, the horses are the primary vehicle to check and gather cattle.”

The neighboring communities of Kirby, Lodge Grass and Sheridan proved vital to helping the Kougls get back on their feet. "Even the folks back in Timber Lake came through for us," William said. "We have a big family and that helped."

Not to be deterred, the young ranchers moved into a small bunkhouse on the property and began building a new house with the help of family and friends. The Kougls moved into the new home in early 2015. They settled in to running yearlings and cow-calf pairs, and William did what he loved best—training horses for the ranch.

"We buy a lot of horses. I prefer to get them as yearlings so I can train them from the start," says William. "Horses are a lifeline for the ranch, because of the



William enjoys time spent working with his horses.

PHOTO BY REBECCA COLNAR

terrain, the horses are the primary vehicle to check and gather cattle. I work to desensitized them (the horses) so they're safe. Because I ride so much alone, my horse needs to be rock solid. Working yearling cattle in the mountains is hard on horses. By the time they are about six, the horses are finished. I'm a real softie for horses, so won't sell them unless I know they are going to a really good home."

William explains the yearling cattle take some encouragement in mid-May when it's time to leave the green valley and head into the mountains. "It takes about a month to get them all into the mountain pastures. It's me, my horse, my bullwhip and the dogs."

In 2017, they began the process of buying out William's parents. "We decided instead of going through the traditional succession planning, we would move ahead and buy the operation; we used the Farm Service Agency's Guaranteed Loan Program as well as an additional land loan through our hometown bank," says

Justine. "It's good I have my education in economics, because of everything we had to put together to get a loan. There was no guessing, the cash flow, budget and all financials were worked out with a fine-tooth comb before we even called the bank. It helped that we had been banking at Dacotah Bank in South Dakota for years and our bank had faith in us."

The couple admits the transition proved challenging. "Get used to being told 'no' a lot when you're trying to take over a ranch," says Justine. "We found support and gained knowledge about how to jump through the hoops. The fact that William grew up ranching and his parents had banked at the same bank for years was beneficial. We felt buying the ranch from his parents for the actual value was best for us. A lot of people wait to transition until their kids are in their 40s and 50s. A lot of times that second generation would have been more successful if they could have been in control of that ranch earlier."

The next challenge that came along was





with the birth of their daughter, Quinn. The couple, who had a son and daughter, were expecting their third child. "My pregnancy was normal and there was no sign of problems, but when Quinn was born, she was gray. The doctors at St. Vincent's suspected Treacher Collins Syndrome which for Quinn is a spontaneous genetic mutation. We were life-flighted to Denver and spent 40 days in the hospital that Fall."

Treacher Collins stunts the growth of lower and mid-range facial areas.



Haying in the Wolf Mountains.
PHOTO BY REBECCA COLNAR

Quinn was born without ears and needs a feeding tube since her trachea is not formed. "She eats everything we do, we just have to blend it to the consistency of liquid. At some point, though, she will be able to eat by mouth."

To date, Quinn has had two surgeries. "We're in Denver a lot. Her next surgery will be a jaw distraction to give her airway more space. She will have dozens of surgeries. The kids at our daughter Nora Jean's school know Quinn, as does



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everyone in the community. All the kids have watched us feed her and care for her, so for most it is just Quinn, not Quinn with Treacher Collins. It's a blessing being in a small community with a great support system."

Being ranchers, surgeries are scheduled around ranch work, whether it's shipping, haying or calving. As for Quinn, she happily joins her siblings helping out on the ranch.

"She has to be with us all of the time, so she'll come out on our side-by-side when we check yearlings or take out salt," Justine explains. "We want her to be like any other kid and do what they do. If she does something naughty, she'll get scolded like the other kids. Right now she's a little behind in her communication development compared to other children in her age group because of her hearing loss, but she will catch up."

They admit the biggest trial is they can't call a babysitter, meaning they don't have any time away. "Plus, since we live in a remote area, there's not a nursing service. We thought the fire changed our lives, but having a kiddo with some super needs

really has," Justine says.

They are first to admit the challenges have made them a closer family. "We lean on each other a lot. Quinn has also made us and our kids very humble."

The Ranch

The Kougls have added a small agri-tourism business to their cattle and horse training enterprises. Since the existing ranch had out buildings, they invited friends to visit, bring horses and enjoy riding in the Wolf Mountains. "Our friends said we should invite people, so we did. We don't want to have a formal dude ranch, so people just come and park their camper, or stay in the bunkhouse," explains William. "I might ride out with them once. What I appreciate is the opportunity to educate them about ranching. We've had people come from Alaska, Florida, New York and California. People love it because they have the place to themselves as we only allow one set of people to come at a time. One of them said it's better than riding in a National Park. We don't charge for it, but ask for a

donation of what they thought their stay here was worth."

Justine and William are strong supporters of Farm Bureau and the organization's work on ag advocacy. "Montana Farm Bureau is great at what they do. It's so important to teach both rural and city kids about agriculture and what goes into producing your food. I hope to get more involved in that side of Farm Bureau once Quinn gets more independent," says Justine who has a blog and stays active on Facebook. "It's important for people to know that the chunk of meat in the freezer came from an animal that was well cared for."

William admits although he's not active on social media, he keeps up with pending legislation and will contact elected officials when there are issues critical to agriculture.

With the Kougls' infinite patience and care of their children, their land and their animals, the ranch way out in the Wolf Mountains should be in good hands for a long time to come.



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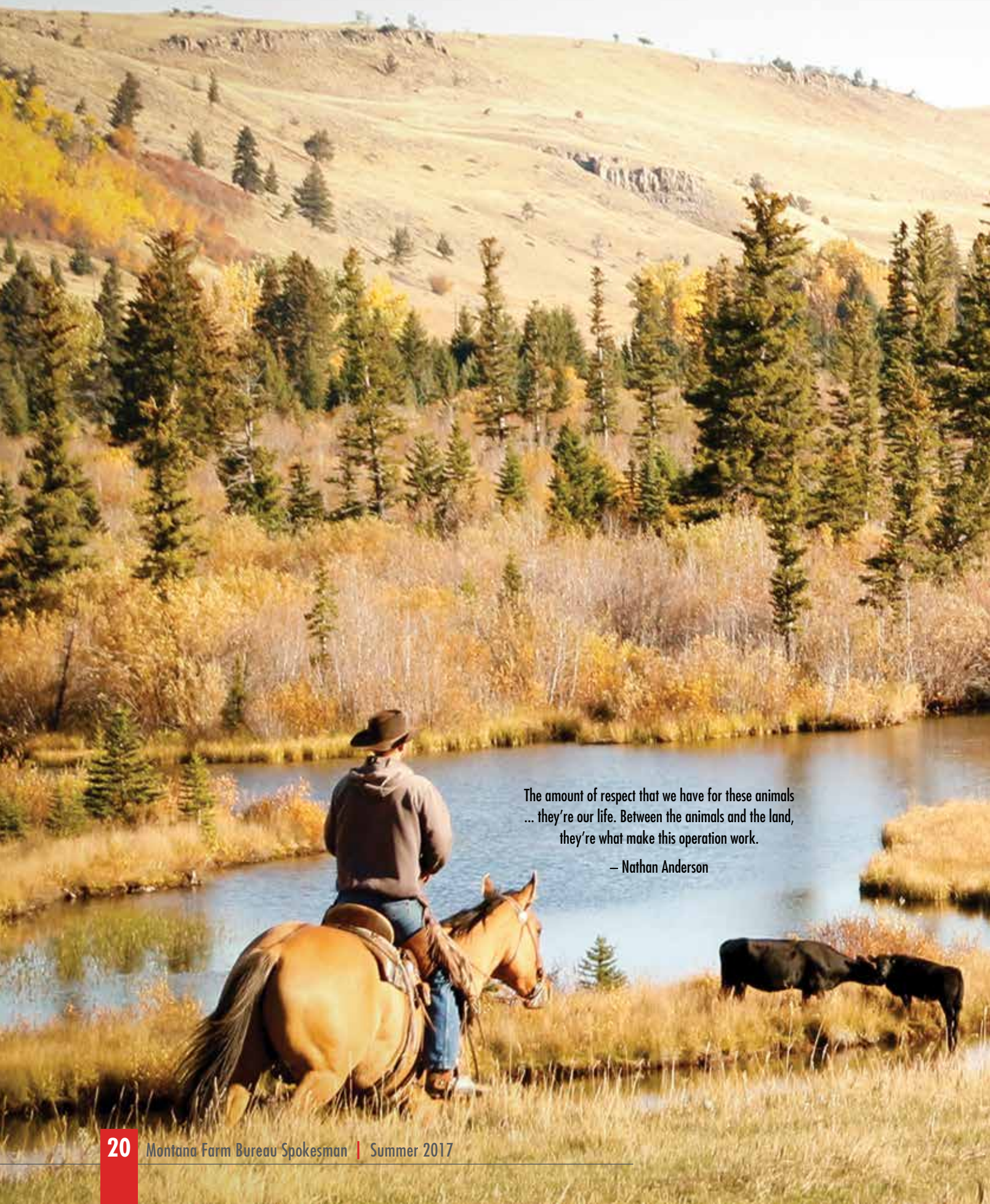


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The amount of respect that we have for these animals
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they're what make this operation work.

— Nathan Anderson

Not satisfied with status quo

Jennie and Nathan Anderson caring for land and cattle in Melville.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LAURA NELSON

On the prairie, the sun's already burned off any morning dew that lingered as they saddled and loaded the horses. At 7:15, the sky is filled with deep blue as they pull out of the Billy Creek Ranch driveway near Melville. But 20 miles up the road and 1,080 feet higher, Jennie and Nathan Anderson unload horses and tighten cinches in a second golden hour, where the sun still casts long shadows mixed with streamers of light from behind the surrounding mountains.

"We do lots of cattle work, which is our favorite activity," Jennie says. "It's just a lot of days of beautiful solitude with the animals."

“I’m proud to be a member of the Farm Bureau. It is a great voice of agriculture. As far as the legislature goes, they’re a powerful organization that really stands behind agriculture.”

This is where Nathan and Jennie first met; where she came as a 23-year-old California urbanite to chase her life-long love of horses as a wrangler at the guest ranch. It's where she fell in love with the Crazy Mountains, the isolated, rugged range that rises out of the prairies, and the wild mountain pastures their cattle graze throughout the summer. It's where she learned to appreciate the livestock and land with the kind of gratitude only one whose livelihood depends on it can.

"I grew up riding horses, but I never gave cattle the same respect that I did horses," she says.

"I love the aspect of being around the animals and working with them; I love the physicality of it. We do real work with

them. They have a purpose, and that makes a difference."

Melding her love and respect for the animals with their working purpose on the ranch developed a new appreciation for not just the horses, but also the cattle they interact with.

"I always felt like cattle were big, dumb animals," she laughs. "But working with Nathan and just being around them taught me that they're complex, intuitive animals that deserve respect, too."

WHEN 'BECAUSE' DOESN'T CUT IT

The young couple's dynamic is one to be respected: they challenge one another, and their circumstances. That's what

drives them to want to succeed in today's ranching industry.

"Having Jennie come in with basically no background in agriculture has opened my eyes to what we do. It brings a new perspective to our job," Nathan says.

While he's steeped in a fifth-generation tradition that they both speak of with the utmost respect and admiration. "It's been a lifelong dream of mine, and now mine and Jennie's, to continue on our family traditions here," he says, "those traditions have to hold up against healthy curiosity and their desire to constantly challenge the status quo."

"I ask a lot of 'why's,'" she says.

"And 'because' is never a good enough answer," he chides.



Jennie and Nathan Anderson with Sasha and Nip.

While the learning curve is certainly steep as a newcomer to the ranching business, it hasn't gotten any gentler as the years go on and that's the way they like it.

"That's one of the things I've really loved; I'm constantly learning. I'm pushing myself to learn more," Jennie says. "We're always trying to do better and not be satisfied. If there's something we can change, we're looking at new opportunities to be better stewards of the land and animals."

LEARNING CURVE ON LOW STRESS

In the mountains, they come upon a small group of cows and calves who are lingering in the shade of a timber stand.

"I think there's a common misconception that when you work with cattle there's got to be a lot of whooping and hollering," Jennie says.

The couple loves to travel on the rare occasion that time allows. Around the world, an introduction including "Montana" and "ranchers" is often met with questions on the stereotypes of the "wild west," where romantic images of rough cowboys running hard and fast behind a wild herd still runs rampant.

In reality, their actions are calculated and precise as they gather the small group and work them through a wide, open valley to the targeted gate. The only sound is a steady creak of fresh leather on a new saddle and the crunching of fall grass under their hooves.

As their horses make their way side by side down the next trail, they question: how did the group react to their pressure? Could I have moved more to the left to parallel while you moved from behind? Where were the dogs? Could we have swung around a little wider to keep that cow from veering off course? What caused that one to break away?

"I've always been fascinated with the cattle, why they do what they do, how they react," Nathan says. His interest was piqued reading Bud Williams' cattle handling material years ago. Then, a group of neighbors got together for a shared handling clinic, and they continue to discover and study new techniques and schools of thought to shape how they work.

"We are holding ourselves accountable when the cattle aren't cooperating one day, we don't blame the livestock for what's going on necessarily," Nathan

says. "We look at our actions and how we handled them, what we could have done differently."

While it does feel good when they get it right, their drive to more refined stockmanship isn't just a warm fuzzy. This was born of necessity. While 'neighboring' is certainly an honored tradition for big work events, the day-to-day has to be done with just their two-person team, bolstered only by their trusty canine sidekicks Sasha and Nip.

"We had to be more efficient," Jennie says, and critical of their own actions. They've tried using a GoPro camera to record and then evaluate their handling in the sorting pen or working corral, reviewing their work like game day footage.

When it comes to pay day, that pays off.

"When you go into the corral after you've shipped cattle and it's soaking wet from sweat; that's your profit on the ground. It's thousands of dollars," Nathan says. Saving in stress-induced shrink makes it worth the extra time to move cattle calmly and quietly through pastures and facility early in their lives.

"Not only are the animals having a better experience because they're not



"Our main goal is to make it as sustainable as we possibly can. That means managing our forests, managing our grasslands, making sure we have economically viable genetics in our cow herd. I think that's the main goal is to make it a sustainable, lasting business."

— Jennie Anderson.

You can learn more about the Discussion Meet or host a local event to prepare your Young Farmers & Ranchers for the state competition this fall. Visit mfbf.org/programs/Young-Farmers-Ranchers or contact your regional manager.

nervous, you're making more money," Nathan says.

"It's very challenging, but it's also extremely rewarding," Jennie says. "We're just scratching the surface. We have a long way to go, but we're learning."

MEETING OF THE MINDS, ON AND OFF THE RANCH

After the last pairs are gathered and brought into the loading pasture, they take a break before trading the horses in for four wheels. They'll use the new Polaris Ranger Jennie earned as the top prize in the 2015 state Young Farmer & Rancher Discussion Meet to deliver mineral. The Discussion Meet is designed to simulate a committee meeting where discussion and active participation is expected, and participants are evaluated on an exchange of ideas and information and communication skills to analyze agricultural issues.

In the shade of the stock trailer, the Billy Creek Ranch "committee meeting" resumes. The topics of discussion are thorough and complex, as they wade through industry issues, leadership and ranch goals. They discuss and analyze the dynamics of serving industry organizations as volunteer leaders; Jennie is the Sweet Grass County Farm Bureau's Young Farmer and Rancher chair, while Nathan is the president of the Crazy Mountain Stockgrowers Association. Topics include how to use timber harvest as a management tool for healthy forests, grasslands and wildlife on their place; what sustainability means; where they see the ranch in the next 100 years; how to share their love for the land and animals with a non-ranching public, and how to keep the next generation engaged and profitable in production agriculture.

"My advice to other young people in the business is just what I've learned: keep an open mind, always keep learning and do the best you can," Jennie says.

Nathan's the first to admit he favors the solitude of the mountains and horseback work with Jennie, Sasha and Nip to a trip to town. However, they see networking and industry leadership as part of the job, too: "It's easy to want to just stay here and do the work," he says. "But we have to get out there, meet new people, network, ask for advice, see how other people make things work on their ranch."

Jennie got involved in Farm Bureau to meet new people in the community, and she now serves on the state YF&R Committee.

"It's a great organization, a great support network that has really provided both of us with a lot of opportunities for growth and advocacy," Jennie says.

They'll have plenty of new learning opportunities ahead on the home front,

too, with the Billy Creek Ranch crew set to expand by one this summer.

"Everything we do now comes down to sustainability and doing what's best for the land. If it's not working in this generation, how can we expect it to carry on for the next?" Nathan says. "We always have to be challenging that status quo and asking, 'maybe there is a better way.'"



COUNTY NEWS

Broadwater County Farm Bureau held an ATV safety training with MFBF's Alena Standley and Farm Bureau members Mary Ellen Schnur, Missy Cox and Chuck and Carole Plymale. Broadwater Ford provided the 4-wheeler. Broadwater County awarded a \$1000 scholarship. On Saturday June 24, **Chouteau County Farm Bureau** members held a pancake breakfast on Front Street at the county insurance office for Fort Benton Fun Day. Members handed out 1500 bottles of water during the parade that morning. **Carbon/Stillwater County Farm Bureau** participated in the July 3 Ag Day Red Lodge Rodeo Parade. They are planning an ATV Safety Training during the Carbon County Fair. **Powder River/Carter County Farm Bureau** held a poker tournament and dinner on June 17. They awarded two scholarships to Lucas and Lyndsey Riley. **Richland County Farm Bureau** held a picnic June 29. **Custer/Fallon County Farm Bureau** had a summer picnic June 28. **Cascade County Farm Bureau** handed out bottled water and member information at the Cascade County Fair July 7. **Northwest Counties Farm Bureau** will host the Young Farmer and Rancher Poker Ride in Ronan on July 9. **Rosebud-Treasure County Farm Bureau** will have a booth at the Rosebud County Fair July 20-22. **Hill-Liberty-Blaine County Farm Bureau** had a booth at an ag event in Joplin. **Sweet Grass County Farm Bureau** is holding a "Ranching 101" workshop in Big Timber August 11. **Yellowstone County Farm Bureau/District 4** are planning to be a part of the Montana Fair August 11-19, with August 12 as Ag Day.



Mary Ellen Schnur, Broadwater County Farm Bureau, with Carole Plymale and Missy Cox at their ATV safety training.

Chouteau County Farm Bureau members at the pre-parade breakfast.



Gallatin County Farm Bureau President Brent Poppe presenting their scholarship to Emily Everest.

County Farm Bureaus reach out to students



Students learn about stewardship of farming and ranching

Phillips County Farm Bureau, Rancher Stewardship Alliance, Phillips County Cattlewomen and Phillips County Livestock Association held a Range Stewardship Tour for students from Great Falls High School. The students had previously heard three Phillips County Farm Bureau members talk about range management and ecology at their school, then applied to attend the tour, thanks to the Dream Big grant. First stop—the Tallow Creek one-room school house where former students shared their memories. The group then had lunch at Mike and Nancy Ereaux's ranch where hamburgers, all the fixings and salads were served. Posters on the wall talked about products and harvesting of crops. "We had a competition where they could guess what food came from what product, which made it fun while they ate lunch," said Nancy Ereaux. The students took a hayride to stations that focused on range management, livestock grazing and how proper ranch stewardship contributes to clean water and better soil. The students then had the opportunity to make butter, ice cream and milk a cow. Next, the group traveled Brian and Vicki Eggebrecht's farm where they learned the importance of soil and farming.

"Brian explained when they go to the doctor and get their blood taken, the doctor sees what their bodies might be missing," explained Nancy. "He told them that is what it's like when he uses his soil probe and gets a soil sample. He sends it away to experts to tell him what that soil needs to be in ideal condition. He then adds to each quadrant of soil to make it as healthy as possible just like the doctor does from their blood sample. He told them that even though they might have heard that farmers and ranchers are raping and pillaging the land, that reality is how we are caring for the land. He explained that the field right next to them produced about 22 bushels to the acre when he got it and after going through the process of soil improvements each year, it now produces 62 bushel to the acre."

They discussed the farm bill, and the fact that the majority of money goes for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs. In addition, the students learned that Phillips County produces food for 2.3 million people. Nancy noted, "We told them if something were to displace us, removes us or buy us out that doesn't produce food with this same land, where are those 2.3 million people going to get their food?"

Big Horn County Farm Bureau hosts career talk

Members of Big Horn County Farm Bureau traveled to Hardin High School where they presented information to two classes on careers in agriculture including ag banking, ag communications, veterinary medicine, animal feed sales, accounting and ag association work.

"It was an honor to be asked to be part of a group of excellent ag business men and women to share with students in Hardin," said Scott Anderson, Agri-Best Feeds Marketing Director. "I was very impressed with how attentive and connected the high schoolers were with each presenter and how many of their questions related both to some of the assignments that they were currently working on in school and also in conjunction to their future goals. This was well worth our investment of time."



Scott Anderson with Agri-Best Feeds at an ag career presentation, Hardin High School.

Women's Leadership Committee Scholarships

The Montana Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee awarded two \$1,000 scholarships. Shane Milton of Joliet is planning to attend University of Idaho. He hopes to work toward becoming an United States Air Force pilot. Shane was active in FFA and has a long list of school achievements and activities including Academic All Stars, being a class officer, and the Science Olympiad. He contributed to his community including assisting with the Carbon County Food Bank, Vacation Bible Camp and being playing on the Montana Badgers Ice Hockey Team. His parents are Paul and Jodi Milton.

Sheridan Johnson plans to attend Montana State University-Bozeman in the fall to pursue a degree in Biotechnology with a minor in Communications. Her academic achievements are many including being the Montana State University Scholar in March 2017, in the National Honor Society and Montana Academic All-State from 2013-2017. She was Montana FFA State President from 2017-2018, was on the volleyball team, and served as student body president. Her community activities included helping DNRC with riparian restoration, Project Pals for underprivileged elementary school children and helping with Montana Range Camp. Her parents are Ken and Cyndi Johnson.



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Foundation News

Awarding deserving students

The Montana Farm Bureau Foundation has presented three scholarships to deserving students:

Trevor Funseth received the Bernard Greufe Honor Scholarship, Meghan Brence won the Collegiate Young Farmer and Rancher Scholarship and Cody Boyce won the Future of Ag Honor Scholarship.

The Bernard Greufe Honor Scholarship is presented to a student planning higher education who has shown high academic achievements, character and endeavor. Trevor Funseth graduated from C.M. Russell High School in 2017 where he earned credits at Great Falls College. He plans to attend Montana State University and pursue degree in history/political science. He has worked for two companies over the past four years while maintaining a 4.0 grade point average. He planned and organized many community events. He received the Heisey Foundation Award, was president of his senior class and was an inductee into the National Honor Society. He plans a career in public service.

Meghan Brence, recipient of the \$1,000 Collegiate Young Farmer and Rancher Scholarship, is a junior at MSU-Bozeman majoring in Agribusiness Management with a minor in Economics. She plans

to earn a Master's and pursue a career in ag banking. This is a \$1,000 scholarship given by the Foundation to a member of a collegiate YF&R program (MSU, UM Western and MCC).

Cody Boyce received the \$1000 Future of Ag Honor Scholarship, which was established thanks to an endowment from Seed Source Inc. of Toston. The sophomore is majoring in animal science with a pre-veterinary track. Cody grew up in a ranch near Lewistown, and has served as assistant to the FFA Foundation while in college. Her career goal is to practice veterinary medicine in Central Montana.

This is the first year the Ag Honor Scholarship has been available. It's open to any student in Montana pursuing a major, minor or graduate degree in a field pertaining to agriculture from an accredited institute of higher education. Students must be enrolled at that institution for the Fall 2017 semester and achieved at least a sophomore level of education. For this scholarship, the selection committee reviewed all applications and choose one award recipient based on quality and sincerity of the applicant statement, character and endeavor. Proven work experience and future goals showing ingenuity in agricultural production and advancement of small scale agriculture will carry extra weight in the judging process.

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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 life. This charitable remembrance perpetuates their belief in the future of agriculture. The Foundation supports the ag community in many ways including:

- Youth ag education & leadership development
- Young Farmers and Ranchers Programs
- Mini grants to elementary & high school student projects relating to agriculture
- Scholarships
- Youth speech contest
- Public education about agricultural issues

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. Consider a codicil in your own will leaving a small percentage of your success to the Montana Farm Bureau Foundation. It will help pave the road for future generations of farmers and ranchers.

Recent Memorial Donations

Lew and Sarah Zimmer ...in memory of Jan Schilling & Jim Moore
Dorothy Hlad-Larson ...in memory of Richard Rohde, Wayne Shipp & Lawrence Hlad

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

Women's Leadership Committee Photo Contest

The Montana Farm Bureau Federation Women's Leadership Committee Photo Contest will be held during the MFBF Annual Convention November 12-15 in downtown Billings. Photos will be on display and voted on by popular vote. The winners (first, second, and third prize) will be announced at the Awards Banquet, Tuesday, November 11. First prize is \$75, second prize \$50, and third prize \$25. The top three winning photographs become the property of MFBF to be used for display and publicity purposes. The entry deadline is October 30, 2017.

The contest theme for 2017 is "**Faces of Farm Bureau.**" The committee encourages members to enter photos that capture what the theme means to them.

The rules of the contest:

- The entrant must be a current MFBF member.
- Open to amateur photographers only.
- Photos must be taken by entrant.
- B&W or color photos, 3x5 or 5x7 or panoramic 4x12.
- Name, address and membership number must be on back.
- No more than three photos per entrant.
- No matting or framing.

More details to be announced. Questions? Contact Alena Standley, 406-799-9955, alenas@mfbf.org.

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Farm Bureau presents awards to deserving legislators

Being a legislator is a true service to constituents. Hundreds of different interests are constantly asking for support or opposition on what must seem like an endless number of bills. Farm Bureau appreciates the efforts of the legislators who worked to pass positive legislation and went out of their way to help kill particularly bad bills as well. MFBF has a report card that "scores" legislators based on votes they took during the 2017 Legislative Session. To check out our complete scorecard, visit our website at www.mfbf.org. We have also awarded the highest scoring legislators as follows:

Distinguished Service Golden Plow Award.

Senator Chas Vincent (SD-1) from Libby and **Senator Eric Moore (SD-19)** from Miles City received the Distinguished Service Golden Plow Award during

Montana Farm Bureau's Summer Conference June 6-8 in Fairmont Hot Springs. This award is given to termed-out legislators who have exhibited exemplary service and dedication to agriculture in their tenure as a Montana legislator.

Friend of Farm Bureau Award

Senator Jeff Welborn (SD-36) from Dillon and **Representative Walt Sales (HD-69)** from Manhattan received the Friend of Farm Bureau Award during Montana Farm Bureau's Summer Conference. This award is given to the Senator and Representative who had the highest overall scores on MFBF's legislative



Custer-Fallon County President Levi Forman and Secretary Staci Ketchum present the Montana Farm Bureau Golden Plow Award to Senator Eric Moore for his service in the legislature.



Representative Walt Sales receives his Friend of Farm Bureau Award from MFBF President Hans McPherson.



Representative Jeff Welborn accepts his Friend of Farm Bureau Award from MFBF President Hans McPherson.

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scorecard; these legislators demonstrated their support of Montana agriculture through their voting record, bill sponsorship and leadership with various committees. Visit www.mfbf.org/newsroom for more information on these worthy legislators.

Golden Windmill Award Winners

These legislators scored in the highest percentages on our Report Card, served on important committees and were active advocates for Montana Agriculture. They deserve special applause and recognition.

Senate

Senator Duane Ankney, SD 20, Colstrip, has a love for the natural resource industry which extends to agriculture and he scored better than perfect on our report card.

Senator Mike Lang, SD 17, Malta, carried SB 155, also known as the seed bill. As a retired agribusiness professional and business owner,



Phillips County Farm Bureau President Tom DePuydt and MFBF's Nicole Rolf with Senator Mike Lang.

he was able to move this important bill through the Legislature.

Senator Ryan Osmundson, SD 15, Buffalo, is a farmer by trade so it makes sense that he always keeps agriculture's best interests in mind, even while keeping close tabs on Montana's budget.

Senator Brian Hoven, SD 13, Great Falls, served as the Chairperson of the Senate Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Committee. He also served on the Senate Taxation Committee.

House

Representative Ray Shaw, HD 71, Sheridan, is very supportive of agriculture and a tireless advocate for noxious weed control and sage grouse conservation.



Counties are encouraged to present the Golden Windmill Award directly to their legislators. Pictured are Cascade County President Jim Pribyl and Secretary Cindy Denning with Sen. Brian Hoven and Rep. Wendy McKamey.

Representative Wendy McKamey, HD 19, Great Falls, is a rancher, served on the Ag Committee, and is a solid supporter for Montana agriculture.

Rep. Rob Cook, HD 18, Conrad, is a very business minded legislator and understands the importance of Montana agriculture. He carried a bill to exempt pulse processing equipment from property tax.

Rep. Ross Fitzgerald, HD 17, Fairfield, is a freshman legislator but he jumped right in and proved to be an excellent advocate and vote for agriculture.

Silver Windmill Awards

MFBF would also like to recognize other legislators who earned high marks on our report card for the 2017 Session. These legislators voted with agriculture much of the time, and were consistently open-minded and collaborative even when they didn't support our position. We thank them for their service and appreciate their work.

House

Rep. Vince Ricci
Rep. Denley Loge
Rep. Bob Brown
Rep. Jim O'Hara
Rep. Alan Redfield
Rep. Zach Brown

Rep. Gordon Pierson
Rep. Fred Anderson
Rep. Peggy Webb
Rep. Ken Holmlund
Rep. Scott Staffanson

Senate

Sen. Ed Buttrey
Sen. Pat Connell
Sen. Terry Gauthier
Sen. Jason Small
Sen. Albert Olszewski

Sen. Gordon Vance
Sen. Tom Richmond
Sen. Roger Webb
Sen. Russ Tempel
Sen. Fred Thomas

Best Magazine in AFBF Awards

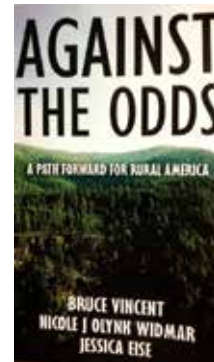
The Montana Farm Bureau Federation *Spokesman* received the Best Magazine Award (States with less than 80,000 members) in the American Farm Bureau Communications Awards. Editor Rebecca Colnar, and Associate Editor Sue Ann Streufert, as well as magazine designer Bobbi Burow of CreativityTank LLC, get kudos for their hard work on the publication. Laura Nelson received an honorable mention for her feature story on the Streit family in the *Fall 2016 Spokesman*.



Against The Odds: A Path Forward For Rural American

BY BRUCE VINCENT, NICOLE OLYNK WIDMAR, JESSICA EISE

REVIEW BY REBECCA COLNAR



Most Farm Bureau members are familiar with Bruce Vincent of Libby. He's the guy who started Provider Pals, a program that sent natural resources providers into urban communities to talk about their work. Vincent became inspired when he realized the unfortunate disconnect between farmers, ranchers, loggers, miners and consumers—a disconnect which saw the logging industry in northwest Montana practically become non-existent due to overzealous environmental regulations and angry activists.

Now Vincent has penned *Against the Odds, A Path Forward for Rural America*. According to the book's back cover, it's a "Powerful first-hand account of life in rural America that offers a broad, probing look at the environmental tensions surrounding the collapse of many rural communities. Vincent shares his first-hand experience of growing up in a logging family, being pushed towards not staying in the family business, leaving the area, and coming back with his wife who wanted to raise their kids in a rural setting.

Vincent continues to talk about his family's trials during the Timber Wars when loggers were denigrated for destroying the

environment. What was really destroyed were rural towns and rural families. His book is divided into three sections: A Rural American; From Sensitivity to Insanity; Towards Progress. He covers the original need for environmentalism, but goes on to explain how everyone wants products, but nobody wants production of those products in their backyards. He talks about the "environmental" movement which became a "conflict" business which did nothing to truly solve problems, but raise money.

He explains that there is hope with a current trend towards people wanting to know more about where products come from and learn about the people who produce them. As Vincent tells college students when he speaks at their events, "The old environmental movement was timely and necessary but failed to mature beyond a three-word version of "Stop Doing That." This old version is not going to work for their generation, especially when they are sharing Plant Earth with between 9 and 11 billion other souls. Those people are going to need food, clothing and shelter. The issue facing their generation is not "are we going to manipulate the

environment to meet the needs of humanity" but rather "where, how and by whom?" are the processes of production going to take place. This vision needs to be grounded in hope instead of fear, science instead of emotion, education instead of litigation and resolution instead of conflict. It must employ, rather than destroy human resources."

Vincent encourages resource providers to be active participants in the conversation; to appreciate concerns of others, but to educate them. "By standing together, engaging a concerned public and offering a new environmental message of hope can save both the Last Best Places and the Last Best People."

This book is a good read and would be great to share with those in the resource industry as well as those who in the past may have been opposed. The 172-page soft-cover can be purchased from amazon.com or, better yet, ask for it at your local bookstore.









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