



TOP STORIES



Absarokee rancher Theo Yanzick receives the Distinguished Service Award for her service to the organization during the Montana Farm Bureau Annual Convention in Missoula.

Absarokee rancher receives special award

Theo Yanzick was astounded when her name was announced as the MFBF Distinguished Service Award during the Montana Farm Bureau Annual Convention November 14-17 in Missoula.

The 40-year Farm Bureau veteran said she was “very surprised” to hear her name called as the DSA recipient.

Yanzick has been involved in production agriculture from a young age. She and her husband, Bruce (deceased), began their journey together in eastern Montana, finally settling in Absarokee where they raised cattle and sheep for more than 40 years. When Bruce passed away in 2019, Theo continued to ranch, irrigate and work with her neighbors.

The 82-year-old has been a Montana Farm Bureau member for more than 40 years, and has served on the MFBF Sheep

and Goat Committee for many consecutive years, having been selected on this committee by four MFBF presidents. She has served as a voting delegate, representing her county at Montana Farm Bureau Conventions.

She is a member of the Valley Watershed Council where her passion for fighting noxious weeds is always at the forefront.

MFBF President Cyndi Johnson, who presented the award, said, “I am beyond thrilled to present this award to Theo Yanzick who has ranched in the valleys of south-central Montana for over 40 years and who remains a stalwart member of her agricultural communities.”

“I am very honored,” said Yanzick. “Farm Bureau is an outstanding organization that includes everyone in agriculture. Farm Bureau takes care of all of us.”

Stay tuned for YF&R

The Montana Farm Bureau Young Farmer & Rancher Leadership Conference is slated for January 27-29 at Fairmont Hot Springs. This statewide leadership conference is designed to give young farmers and ranchers, ages 18-35, insights into agricultural issues and great networking opportunities.

Look for updates on the MFBF Facebook page and at mfbf.org.

D.C. Fly-In

Voting members are encouraged to get involved and make a difference by commenting on local, state and national level agency rule proposals, testifying on bills, contacting legislators and more.

The MFBF Fly-In, June 12-14 in Washington, D.C., rewards members for participation in the policy development process with an opportunity to take their advocacy to the next level.

Although the applications aren't due until April 10, 2023, the time to get involved is now. Find out more at mfbf.org/Policy-Advocacy/DC-FlyIn.

Questions? Contact Senior Director of Governmental Affairs Nicole Rolf, nicoler@mfbf.org.

News Brief Plus

Want additional information regarding articles in this publication as well as additional county Farm Bureau and ag industry news? Check out the *December News Brief Plus* online for these stories and more.

- MSU Extension mental health survey
 - More YF&R News
 - MFBF 2023 Priority Issues
- Visit www.mfbf.org/Media/News-Brief.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the MFBF Board and Staff

Officers elected

The Montana Farm Bureau Federation delegates elected officers during the organization's 2022 Annual Convention in Missoula.

Cyndi Johnson, a Conrad small grains farmer, was re-elected as president and Gary Heibertshausen, an Alzada sheep rancher, was re-elected as vice president.

J.M. Peck, a cattle rancher from Melrose, was elected as the new District 2 Director. Peck had served as the MFBF Young Farmer & Rancher Committee Chair for the past three years. Re-elected to the board were Casey Mott, District 4, a cattle rancher from Custer; Don Steinbeisser, Jr., District 6, a diversified farmer from Sidney; Ed Bandel, District 8, a wheat farmer from Floweree, and Jim Willis, District 10, a cattle producer from Wilsall.

Nick Courville, a Charlo rancher was the newly elected Young Farmer & Rancher Chair. Carla Lawrence from Boyd was re-elected as the organization's Women's Leadership Committee Chair.

New voting members

Cascade – Karissa Floerchiner, Garrett and Megan Reinartz; *Chouteau* – William Brown; *Gallatin* – Christopher Scoones; *Hill-Liberty-Blaine* – Mardy Cox; *Northwest* – Jerry Oler, Tyson Reese, David & Wendy Nash; *Powder River/Carter* – Kenneth Talcott & Joy Price, Paula Nisley; *McCone* – Kelsy Schillinger; *Ravalli* – Katelyn Rennaker; *Richland* – Dwight & Diana Thiesen, Shane and Kaci Schantz, Raymond Bell; *Roosevelt* – Laurence Birge; *Southwest County* – Shane Sorden; *Yellowstone* – Gunder & Sue McCombs, Craig and Lucila Simonds.

MSU Extension working on mental health survey

Andee Baker, a Park City resident, undergraduate student at MSU and MFBF convention intern, is currently working with MSU Extension on their USDA-funded farm stress project that seeks to develop and disseminate mental wellness information and programming to those working in Montana agriculture.

Baker would like farmers and ranchers to share the survey link with anyone across the state who works on a farm or ranch (seasonal, migrant, full time or part-time), as MSU Extension is currently collecting data from farm/ranch workers as to their stressors, and perhaps more importantly, which stress management topics they would be most interested in learning about.

After data analysis, the plan is to create free education and outreach programs for farm and ranch workers to help them manage their stress and improve their mental well-being. MSU Extension has been in the forefront for addressing mental health issues for farmers and ranchers.

The survey takes an average of twelve minutes and can be found at: <https://farmstress.us/ag-worker-survey/>. If a paper copy is preferred, Baker can mail copies to those who inquire.

Questions? Contact Andee Baker, andeebaker721@gmail.com, (406) 860-4078.



The 2022 Discussion Meet winner, Mark Boyd, receives the key to a Polaris Ranger.

Boyd wins Discussion Meet

Mark Boyd, a young cattle rancher from Alder, topped three other competitors to win the Montana Farm Bureau Young Farmer and Rancher Discussion Meet. He received the keys to a Polaris Ranger and will be eligible to compete in the national competition which will be held during the American Farm Bureau Convention in January in Puerto Rico.

The MFBF Discussion Meet was held November 15 during the 103rd Montana Farm Bureau Annual Convention in Missoula.

"I want to give a big thank you to the participating Montana Polaris dealers, Montana Farm Bureau and all of the competitors for making the Discussion Meet possible," said Boyd. "I look forward to the national competition."

The three other contestants in the Final Four were Morgan Kuntz from Dillon, Gwynn Simeniuk from Glasgow and Nick Courville from Charlo.

Calendar

AFBF Annual Convention

January 6-11, 2023
San Juan, Puerto Rico

MFBF YF&R Leadership Conference

January 27-29
Fairmont Hot Spring, MT

Calling on the Capitol

February 6-7
Helena, MT

People

Gary Heibertshausen was interviewed by Agri-Pulse on grazing management.

Scott Kulbeck and **Gary Heibertshausen** interviewed with ABC Fox regarding the MFBF Convention.

The Bozeman Chronicle and KMON interviewed MFBF's Senior Governmental Affairs Director **Nicole Rolf** on MFBF's Priority Issues. The Chronicle also interviewed J.M. Peck on challenges of high fertilizer costs.

During the MFBF Convention the Northern Ag Network interviewed MFBF members **Cyndi Johnson**, **Scott Kulbeck**, **Gary Heibertshausen**, **Becky Stuart**, **Nicole Rolf** and **Morgan Kuntz** along with presenters **Jason Laird**, **Randy Dwyer** and **Jordan Levi**. Western Ag Network interviewed **Andee Baker**, **Courtney Briggs** and MT Sec of Ag **Christy Clark**.

NATIONAL NEWS

Look for the Ag Census

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is conducting the 2022 Census of Agriculture to provide a complete picture of all U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Collected once every five years, census data inform decisions that affect ranches, their community and the industry.

Watch for the Ag Census form in the mail. Everyone who receives the Ag Census is required by law to respond by February 6, 2023.

Identity theft benefit

If you even suspect that you could have an identity theft issue, as a Farm Bureau member you now have available Identity Theft Consultation to assist you in answering your questions and getting you started on the road to recovery. Be sure to have your MFBF membership number available to provide for verification purposes.

For help call Identity Theft Consultation, 1-844-855-1894.

Check out all the Farm Bureau member benefits at mfbf.org/benefits.

The sustainability story

No one knows the real story about farming's sustainability better than real farmers, like seventh-generation Iowa farmer Mitchell Hora. Watch a video about Hora that's featured on AFBF's interactive map of farm and ranch families across the country working to build a sustainable future of safe and abundant food, fiber and renewable fuel for our nation and the world.

Visit www.fb.org/land/sustainability-in-ag.

Senate bill protects farmers from the SEC

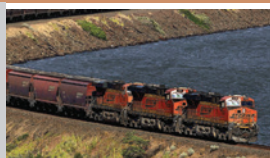
Farm Bureau is strongly supporting the "Protect Farmers from the SEC Act" introduced by U.S. Senator John Boozman (R-AR), ranking member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, and committee member Sen. Mike Braun (R-IN). The legislation would protect family farmers and ranchers from burdensome greenhouse gas emissions reporting rules proposed by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

"This appears to be an example of overreach by the Securities and Exchange Commission," said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. "Farmers and ranchers are already heavily regulated by multiple agencies at the local, state and the federal level. New SEC reporting requirements will no doubt make an already complicated patchwork of regulations even more cumbersome."

The Protect Farmers from the SEC Act will exempt family farmers and ranchers from these reporting requirements, ensuring they are not required to track and disclose granular on-farm data regarding individual operations and day-to-day activities in order to stay compliant with the companies that purchase their products.

Montana Farm Bureau urges its members to contact Senator Steve Daines and Senator Jon Tester to support of this legislation.

A companion bill was introduced in the House earlier this year.



FB praises averted rail strike

The Montana Farm Bureau expresses gratitude to the bi-partisan effort by Congress to avert a disastrous rail strike. More than 2,000 Farm Bureau members nationwide submitted comments to their Congressional delegations, voicing strong concerns on how a rail

strike would harm the economy across the country.

"The strike would have been devastating to farmers," said MFBF President Cyndi Johnson, a grain farmer from Conrad. "The disruptions in this critical rail service would have had ripple effects that would have hurt farmers and our buyers. Many grain buyers, who purchase millions of bushels of grain from Montana, would have been stymied, thus negatively affecting the entire economy of our state. We are thankful our elected officials were able to prevent that from happening."

American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall added, "AFBF applauds Congress and President Biden for working together to avert a rail strike. High diesel prices, a truck driver shortage, and low water levels on the Mississippi River have already made shipping conditions difficult. A rail strike would have had a devastating effect on the American economy, especially as families grapple with higher prices caused by inflation."

"Farmers rely on trains to transport food and feed, and they also depend on the rails to bring important supplies like fertilizer back to the farm, which is why AFBF urged Congress and the president to find a solution to the rail worker impasse," Duvall said. "Their bipartisan efforts will help ensure farmers can continue delivering food from their farms to families across the country."

MFBF board sets 2023 priority issues

The Montana Farm Bureau Board of Directors voted to approve the organization's priority issues for 2023 following the Delegate Session at the MFBF Annual Convention in mid-November. Issues fall under two headings: Preserving and Protecting Property Rights and Traditional Land Uses and Promoting Sustainable and Profitable Family Farm and Ranch Businesses.

Preserving and Protecting Property Rights includes policies that prevent federal overreach, protect senior water rights and support incentivizing programs to keep agricultural land in production.

Promoting Sustainable and Profitable Family Farm and Ranch Businesses covers supporting tax reform, awarding productivity, providing a strong safety net for farmers and ranchers in the 2023 Farm Bill, reforming regulations that impede agricultural production, increasing marketing opportunities, and improving infrastructure.

MFBF President Cyndi Johnson said, "Thank you to our members for surfacing these critical issues. We look forward to keeping these issues in the forefront as we enter a legislative year in Montana and continue to work with our representatives and senators in Washington."

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COUNTY NEWS

Counties receive President's Awards at Convention

During the MFBF Annual Convention November 14-17 in Missoula, County Farm Bureaus received Silver and Golden Windmill Awards for their programs. The best-of-the-best received President's Awards for Group 1 (117 voting members or less) and Group 2 (118 voting members or more). A county Farm Bureau had to make membership quota or achieve voting member gain to be considered for the President's Awards. Presenting the awards were MFBF Vice President Gary Heibertshausen and President Cyndi Johnson.



*Group 1 - Powder River County
Membership Development and Public Relations
County President J.J. McDowell*



*Group 2 - Cascade County
Public Policy
County board member Marjorie Pribyl and
President Merrill McKamey*



*Group 2 - Southwest Counties
Public Relations
District 2 Director Rhonda Boyd*



*Group 2 - Northwest Counties
Leadership Development
County President Josh Senecal*



*Lewis & Clark - Group 2
Ag Promotion & Education
County President Karl Christians*



*Phillips County - Group 1
Leadership Development, Ag Promotion &
Education and Public Policy
County Secretary Joy DePuydt*



*Group 2 - Yellowstone
Membership Development
Yellowstone County Board Members*