

# GRASSROOTS LEADER

A Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation Volunteer Leader Newsletter

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## Highlights from 86<sup>th</sup> MFBF Annual Meeting

Approximately 700 members, representing 82 county Farm Bureaus, gathered in Jackson on Nov. 29-Dec. 1 for the 86<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF).

Participants enjoyed a time of fellowship as they conducted business, electing leaders and adopting the policy that will guide our organization in the coming year.

Newly-elected or reelected directors who will serve on the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation Board of Directors include: Dist. 1 - Dr. Jim Perkins, Iuka; Dist. 3 - Paul Briscoe, Oxford; Dist. 5 - Mike Ferguson, Senatobia; Dist. 7 - L.C. Sanders, Hamilton; Dist. 9 - Betty Mills, Winona; Dist. 11 - Kenneth Thompson, Philadelphia; Dist. 13 - James Ford, Taylorsville; Dist. 15 - Jeff Mullins, Meadville; Dist. 17 - E. A. "Pud" Stringer, Foxworth; and Dist. 19 - Terry Estis, Lucedale.

Dott Arthur of Carthage was reelected State Women's Committee Chair and will serve on the MFBF Board of Directors. Shelby Williams of Seminary was reelected State Women's Committee Vice-Chair.

Regional Women's Committee Chairs were elected in even-numbered regions. Reelected were Kay Perkins of Iuka, Region 2; Betty Mills of Winona, Region 4; Billie McCully of Louisville, Region 6; and Wanda Hill of Isola, Region 8.

Prior to convention, Patrick Swindoll of Hernando was elected Young Farmers and Ranchers State Committee Chair. In this capacity, he will also serve on the MFBF Board of Directors.

Outstanding County Programs include: Region 1 - Bolivar County; Region 2 - Tippah County; Region 3 - Simpson County; Region 4 - Montgomery County; Region 5 - Walthall County; Region 6 - Leake County; Region 7 - Forrest County; and Region 8 - Madison County.

Winner of the President's Award for most outstanding program in the state is Simpson County.

### Dr. Alan Blaine Receives Distinguished Service Award

Dr. Alan Blaine of Starkville received the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation Distinguished Service Award.

Head of the North Mississippi Research and Extension Center in Verona, Blaine is a former MSU-Extension Service soybean specialist recognized as one of the top soybean specialists in the United States. Over the years, he has worked closely with Farm Bureau to develop policy that has been beneficial to soybean producers. In addition, he has given numerous soybean reports and workshops for many Farm Bureau groups.

Blaine has served as a judge for the Young Farmers and Ranchers Achievement Award and Discussion Meet contests. He has worked with the Ag in the Classroom Program, conducting training sessions at teacher workshops.

The Distinguished Service Award is the highest honor Farm Bureau bestows on an individual, and it is reserved for someone who has truly made a difference in the lives of Mississippi farmers.

### Breaux Recognized for Excellence in Leadership

Honorary Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) Vice President Louis Breaux III of Kiln was presented the Excellence in Leadership Award in recognition of his many contributions to Farm Bureau and agriculture.

Breaux has served in numerous Farm Bureau leadership positions through the years, including president of Hancock County Farm Bureau; a director on the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation Board of Directors; and South Mississippi Vice President.

In the 1980s, Breaux was instrumental in organizing Farm Bureau's Gumbo Festival, a popular part of the annual Washington, D.C., Legislative Tour.

When Hurricane Katrina struck the Mississippi Gulf Coast in 2005, Breaux headed up a food drop that provided needed supplies to countless numbers of families who were without anything.

He helped organize and served as president of the County Fair and Livestock Association. He is a past president of the Hancock/Harrison Cattlemen's Association and was named the Mississippi Cattlemen's Association's Commercial Cattleman of the Year in 2000.

Breaux and Jeannette, his wife of 59 years, have seven living children, 20 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

## Stephen Bailey Wins Young Farmer Contests

Vardaman sweet potato grower Stephen Bailey won both the Young Farmers and Ranchers (YF&R) State Achievement Award Contest and the YF&R State Discussion Meet Contest.

As State Achievement Award winner, Stephen and wife Kisha will receive 300 hours use of a Kubota tractor, 100 hours use of a John Deere tractor, a Dodge truck, courtesy of Southern Farm Bureau Casualty Insurance Company, and cash awards, including a \$500 check from Dodge.

State Discussion Meet prizes included a Kawasaki 4-wheeler from Got Gear Motorsports, LLC, courtesy of Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company, and cash awards, courtesy of Dodge and Federal Land Bank Associations.

Stephen and Kisha will represent Mississippi in the national Young Farmers and Ranchers Achievement Award Contest at the American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting in New Orleans in January.

## McCurdy is Ag Ambassador

Meredith McCurdy of Batesville is Farm Bureau's Ag Ambassador Award recipient. The Ag Ambassador Award recognizes individuals who have gone beyond their normal range of activities in promoting Mississippi agriculture.

Meredith has served as state FFA president and is currently one of 20 students across the nation chosen to serve as 2007-2008 National Collegiate Agricultural Ambassadors, a division of the Collegiate FFA Program.

Meredith was first runner-up in the Miss Farm Bureau-Mississippi contest for two consecutive years. She is a recipient of the Young Farmers and Ranchers and Berta Lee White scholarships and a former MFBF summer intern. She served as Panola County Miss Hospitality.

Meredith is a student at Mississippi State University, majoring in agriculture information science with a concentration in communication.

## Helton is Miss Farm Bureau Mississippi

Ashley Helton of Tishomingo County won the title of Miss Farm Bureau-Mississippi and a \$2,000 scholarship. First alternate, Ashlynn Bloomfield of Jackson County, will receive a \$1,000 scholarship.

State Talent Contest winners include: Division I - Abbey Swartzendruber of Monroe County; Division II - Hannah Watkins of Neshoba County; and Division III - Teresa Savell of Leake County.

Talent alternates are: Division I - Jessica Harthcock of Holmes County; Division II - Blaine Watson of Lee County; and Division III - Angela White of Amite County.

## \$250 Drawing Results

Eight Farm Bureau members received a \$250 check when their names were selected in a random drawing held for all members whose dues were paid by Oct. 31.

They include: Region 1 - Morris Daniels - DeSoto County; Region 2 - Brenda J. Phipps - Lee County; Region 3 - Charles E. Sandifer, Jr. - Jefferson Davis County; Region 4 - Judy Turnage - Lowndes County; Region 5 - Mary Ann Smith - Lincoln County; Region 6 - Johnny A. Iddings - Wayne County; Region 7 - Charles D. Farmer - Jones County; and Region 8 - H. H. Lott - Carroll County.

## Calendar of Events

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Jan. 8     | Legislative Session Begins                                 |
| Jan. 13-16 | AFBF Annual Meeting, New Orleans                           |
| Jan. 15-16 | Delta Ag Expo<br>Bolivar County Expo Building<br>Cleveland |
| Jan. 18-20 | YF&R Leadership Conference<br>Tupelo                       |
| Jan. 30    | Presidents/Secretaries Meeting<br>Jackson                  |

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| Jan. 31    | MFBF Winter<br>Commodity Conference<br>Jackson |
| Jan. 31    | Legislative Reception<br>Jackson               |
| Feb. 3-9   | Food Check-Out Week                            |
| Feb. 6     | Food Check-Out Day                             |
| Feb. 11-13 | Legislative Tour<br>Washington, D.C.           |
| April 10   | Magnolia Beef and Poultry Expo<br>Raleigh      |

## Bogue Phalia Watershed Selected for a National Water Quality Study

The Bogue Phalia Watershed in northwestern Mississippi has been chosen for a water quality study. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is studying seven watersheds across the nation to better understand how natural factors and agricultural management practices (AMPs) affect the transport of water and chemicals.

Natural factors include climate, soil type, topography and geology. AMPs include tillage practices, irrigation, and chemical applications. The study approach is similar in each watershed so that the results can be compared and contrasted and more accurately predict conditions in other agricultural settings.

Other watersheds chosen are located in Washington, California, Nebraska, Iowa, Indiana-Ohio, and Virginia-Delaware.

## Delta Ag Expo

The 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Delta Ag Expo will be held at the Bolivar County Expo Building in Cleveland on Tuesday, Jan. 15, and Wednesday, Jan. 16.

Highlights of this year's expo will include specialists' updates on cotton, soybeans, rice, corn, wheat and milo as well as information on bedding systems, grain storage, pest management issues and policy/economics.

The expo will boast over 100 commercial agricultural-related exhibits as well as educational exhibits.

Delta Ag Expo is cosponsored by the Delta Ag Expo Corporation and Mississippi State University Extension Service. For more information, contact Ben Spinks, Chairman, Bolivar County Extension Service, at (662)843-8361, or Don Respass, Co-Chairman, Coahoma County Extension Service, at (662) 624-3070.

## Hurt Named State Sales Manager

Effective Jan. 1, 2008, David Hurt, LUTCF, of Brookhaven, will assume the position of State Sales Manager of Mississippi Farm Bureau Casualty Insurance Company, Southern Farm Bureau Casualty Insurance Company, and Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company. He succeeds retiring State Sales Manager William E. "Sonny" Lawson, who has held the position since May 1992.

A graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi, David began his career with Farm Bureau as a career agent in 1992. He was promoted to the position of District Sales Manager for District V in 2000 and has been named Mississippi's District Sales Manager of the Year for five consecutive years.

David and his wife Tela have three children, Collin, 10, Austin, 10, and Nicholas, 5.

## Beef Cattle Specialist

An animal scientist with expertise in herd reproduction is the new beef cattle specialist with the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

Justin D. Rhinehart, who began his duties this past summer, has been working with the state's beef cattle producers to maintain and develop Extension programs that improve feeder calf marketing, stocker cattle management and heifer development.

Rhinehart said his goals are to help beef producers pursue alternative marketing opportunities for products and use research findings to develop management practices that improve profitability.

## Agri-view Visits Annual Meetings

The next "Agri-view" television program will feature highlights from the 86<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation and the 89<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the American Farm Bureau Federation. The program will air on Jan. 30 at 5:30 p.m. on RFD TV.

You can find "Agri-view" on Channel 9409 on the Dish Network and on Channel 379 on DirecTV.

"Agri-view" is a production of the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation.

## Annual Cotton Short Course

Cotton growers across the state should mark their calendars for the Mississippi State University (MSU) Extension Service's 24<sup>th</sup> annual Cotton Short Course to be held Dec. 11-12.

Extension specialists, researchers and professionals from MSU and other institutions and agencies will cover topics such as cotton fertility, disease, weed and insect

management, pest management, production practices and emerging technologies.

The course will be held at the Bost Extension Center on the MSU campus. The program begins at 10 a.m. The deadline for early registration was Nov. 30, but attendees can register at the door (\$100 fee) beginning at 8:30 a.m.

For more information, visit <http://msucares.com/crops/cotton/shortcourse07/> or contact Tammy Scott at (662) 325-2701.

## Mississippi Horses

The January/February 2008 issue of *Mississippi Farm Country* magazine will look at our state's horse industry. Horses contributed over \$1 billion to the state's economy and generated some 38,900 jobs in 2006.

According to figures from the Mississippi State University (MSU) Extension Service, Mississippi boasted a total of 113,063 in 2006. That's a substantial increase from 75,000 horses in 2003.



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