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OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU

Perspective

April 28, 2017

Blaine County Farm Bureau awards three \$2,000 scholarships

The Blaine County Farm Bureau recently awarded three \$2,000 scholarships to local high school seniors who plan to pursue a higher education degree in agriculture after graduation.

After reviewing several outstanding applications, the Blaine County Farm Bureau board awarded the three \$2,000 scholarships to Koby Smith of Okeene, Dalton Cash of Fay, and Garrett Parker of Watonga.

For the past three years, Blaine County Farm Bureau in Watonga has awarded scholarships each year to two qualified students. With a number of commendable

applications for this year's scholarship, the board made the decision to award one additional scholarship this year with the hope of supporting another student's dream to pursue an agricultural career.

The scholarship was created in an effort to provide financial assistance to local students who have a passion for agriculture. Qualified students must be a graduating high school senior attending Watonga, Geary, Okeene or Canton public schools, must have a 2.5 GPA or better, and must enroll full-time in an agriculture program at an accredited Oklahoma institution of high learning.

OKFB Commodity Tour Tentative Schedule

Wednesday, May 3

- 7:30 a.m. Load buses at home office
- 9 a.m. Valley View Pecans – John Grundmann
- 11 a.m. Tour Leroy O'Dell Farm
- 12 p.m. Lunch sponsored by O'Dells
- 1:30 p.m. Tour Brett O'Dell Farm
- 2 p.m. Big Creek Event – Darrin Bond
- Visit Sulphur area with the Artesian Hotel
- 6 p.m. Dinner at Rusty Nail Winery sponsored by Murray County

Thursday, May 4

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast at hotel
- 9 a.m. OK Wire Products
- 12:30 p.m. Noble Foundation
- 12:45 p.m. Welcome/Lunch: Red River
- 1 p.m. Future of Sustainable Beef
- 1:40 p.m. Systems Based Beef Management
- 2:30 p.m. CAAST/Integrity Beef Herd
- 3 p.m. Break
- 3:30 p.m. Growsafe Systems
- 4:10 p.m. Forage Improvements & Adaptations
- 5 p.m. Depart Red River
- 5:30 p.m. Crawfish Farm
- 6:30 p.m. Crawfish boil dinner sponsored by Sam Barrick

Friday, May 5

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast at hotel
- 8 a.m. Drive thru Chickasaw National Recreation Area
- 10 a.m. Chickasaw Cultural Center
- 12 p.m. Lunch at Chickasaw Cultural Center
- Head back to OKC



Oklahoma Farm Bureau Safety Specialist David Turner visited Kellyville on April 12 to speak to students about DUI prevention. Attendees attempted to drive a Go Kart and walk in a straight line with intoxication goggles, demonstrating how difficult simple tasks can be when under the influence.



Texas County Farm Bureau to host hot dog feed May 1 to kick off Guymon Pioneer Days

Texas County Farm Bureau will host a free open house and hot dog feed to kick off this year's Guymon Pioneer Days on Monday, May 1 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Members and non-members are welcome to attend the open house and enjoy free hot dogs, chips and drinks. The open house will be held at their office located at 121 NW 9th Street in Guymon.

As an event known well to rodeo fans, the Guymon Pioneer Days attracts nearly 1,000

contestants from around the country each year. In addition to all of the favorite rodeo competitions, attendees will have the opportunity to enjoy a variety of events including a daily carnival, a parade, mutton bustin,' horsemanship contests, pageants and more.

For more information about the event or to view the schedule of activities, visit the Oklahoma Farm Bureau website or the Guymon Pioneer Days Facebook page.

Oklahoma Youth Leading Agriculture Conference June 14-16

Applications for the Young Farmers & Ranchers' Oklahoma Youth Leading Agriculture Conference are now available on the OKFB website at okfarmbureau.org/applications. All applications **must be postmarked by May 26** to Zac Swartz, 2501 N. Stiles, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or emailed to Zac.Swartz@okfb.org.





Above: Comanche County Young Farmers & Ranchers recently visited four classrooms to share an Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom program featuring seeds. This photo, sent by Rachel Bohl, shows the children having fun with their projects.



Right: Oklahoma Farm Bureau's Senior Field Services Director and Commodities Coordinator Todd Honer speaks to an attendee about OKFB member benefits at the Oklahoma City Farm Show April 20. This year's Farm Show offered tons of exhibits displaying all of the latest advances in agriculture, including tractor, sprayers, tillage, harvest equipment, cattle management products and much more.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau Online

 Celebrating OKFB's 75 years on social media. Ready to see some old photos? Make sure to follow along with #OKFB75 for a snapshot at OKFB history each week on Facebook and Twitter. Recognize someone? Be sure to let us know by commenting or replying to each post.

 The spring issue of *Oklahoma Country* is almost here! The next issue of *Oklahoma Country* will be in mailboxes soon. Inside you'll find an in-depth article about OKFB's new commemorative courtyard, the next installment in the OKFB history series and a feature story about the impact of the wildfires in northwest Oklahoma. Keep an eye out for the digital version to be released in the next couple of weeks.



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Study indicates voters oppose using ad valorem tax funds for municipal services

An Op-Ed by Jeramy Rich, Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation President

Oklahoma legislators face tough decisions as they work to fund services at current levels in this season of declining revenues. While it is important to address current needs, we must also be mindful of long-term solutions for a better Oklahoma. We need carefully crafted solutions rather than band-aids to get us by in the short term.

Providing economic opportunity for all families is a cornerstone for so many of our state's critical needs – healthcare, public safety, education and core infrastructure just to name a few. Funding those services requires a balance of revenue sources that should be shared by all users.

In Oklahoma, ad valorem taxes have historically been used to fund county government services like roads, bridges, courthouse functions and local public school infrastructure and instruction.

Property owners provide the major source of funding for all users of these services – including non-property owners. Funding additional services, like public safety, with these ad valorem tax funds would require either raising property taxes or cutting existing services – neither of which is a good solution.

In a recent survey, 60 percent of Oklahoma voters polled indicated they would not support additional property taxes to fund current services at the county or municipal level. Furthermore, nearly 40 percent of those polled believe their current property taxes are too high.

Clearly, the solutions are not easy. But, placing the additional tax burden on personal property is both unpopular and unfair. I am confident we can come up with a better alternative.

Reminder: YF&R Golf Classic registration ends May 5

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers will hold their 15th annual YF&R Golf Classic Friday, May 12 at SilverHorn Golf Club in Oklahoma City. **Registration will be accepted through May 5.**

The annual scramble-style tournament opens with check-in at 11:30 a.m., and golfers will tee off at 1 p.m. Several prizes will be awarded, and lunch will be provided. All proceeds will be given to benefit the OKFB Legal Foundation.

The cost is \$350 per team of four golfers or \$90 per individual. Mulligans can be purchased for \$10 each, with a limit of three per person. Tournament costs must be paid in advance.

To register for the YF&R Golf Classic, call Zac Swartz at (405) 205-0070.

Oklahoma teacher selected for White-Reinhardt Educator Scholarship

Zena Lewis, a teacher from Owasso Public Schools, was selected by the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture as one of 11 educators to receive a \$1,500 scholarship to attend the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference.

Sponsored by the Foundation's White-Reinhardt Fund for Education in cooperation with the American Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee, the scholarship is awarded to educators for their exceptional efforts to encourage agricultural literacy. Scholarship recipients were judged on past use of innovative programs to

educate students about agriculture as well as plans to implement information gained at the AITC conference in their own lesson plans and share the information with other teacher and volunteer educators.

The NAITC Conference helps educators from across the nation learn how to incorporate real-life agricultural applications into science, social studies, language arts, math and nutrition lessons. In addition, the conference brings together a diverse group of organizations and speakers to showcase their successful programs, address how to improve agricultural education and literacy

and offer educational materials. The Agriculture Department coordinates the AITC program with the goal of helping students gain a greater awareness of the role of agriculture in the economy and society.

The American Farm Bureau Federation and state Farm Bureaus also support and participate in the program's efforts. The White-Reinhardt Fund for Education honors two former American Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee chairwomen, Berta White and Linda Reinhardt, who were leaders in early national efforts to improve agricultural literacy.

Member Benefits

New member benefit – Grasshopper Mowers

Dreading that long day of mowing your grass? Make it easier with a new Grasshopper mower! With your OKFB membership, you are now eligible to receive 15 percent off MSRP available on all models, implements and accessories with purchase of a new mower. You'll have your choice of decks ranging from 41-72 inches, with the option of a PowerFold® Electric Deck Life on some models. In addition, all models feature Suspension Seats with optional PowerVac™ Collection Systems.

www.okfarmbureau.org/benefits

Calendar

OKFB Commodity Tour

May 3-5 • Southcentral Oklahoma
Contact: Marcia Irvin (405) 523-2405

OKFB YF&R Golf Tournament

May 12 • SilverHorn Golf Club, Oklahoma City
Contact: Zac Swartz (405) 205-0070

Oklahoma Legislature Adjourns

May 26 • Oklahoma State Capitol
Contact: Tasha Duncan (405) 530-2681

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New conservation award program comes to Oklahoma

From the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation

The Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association, The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation, and ITC Holdings Corp., in partnership with the Sand County Foundation, are bringing the Leopold Conservation Award® program to Oklahoma.

"Governor Mary Fallin is pleased that our agriculture community has come together to bring the Leopold Conservation Award to Oklahoma," said Jim Reese, Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture.

"Farmers and ranchers in our state have long been leaders in conservation. From our early beginnings with the Dust Bowl to today, each generation has strived to leave the land better than they found it. Through this award, we will recognize an exceptional family and thank them for their contributions to a better Oklahoma."

The Leopold Conservation Award recognizes agricultural landowners actively committed to a land ethic and investing

in private land conservation. It celebrates extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation by private landowners, inspires other landowners by example, and provides a platform by which agricultural community leaders are acknowledged as conservation ambassadors to those outside of agriculture.

This program brings together agriculture, government, environmental organizations, industry and academia to advance the cause of private lands conservation.

The common bond of all organizations and entities involved is a strong commitment to conservation stewardship on private lands, which is the most prominent land ownership model in Oklahoma. More than 90 percent of Oklahoma lands are privately owned.

"We are pleased to partner with these great organizations to bring the Leopold Conservation Award Program to Oklahoma," said Jeremy Rich, Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation

president. "This award fits well with our commitment to educating and advocating for our state's hardworking farm and ranch families and their history of responsible environmental stewardship."

The inaugural award will be presented on Earth Day 2018 in Oklahoma City. Recipients will receive \$10,000 and a crystal award, along with recognition through the Sand County Foundation as a 2018 Oklahoma recipient.

Applications for the award are now being accepted. The \$10,000 award will honor Oklahoma farmers, ranchers and other private landowners who voluntarily demonstrate outstanding stewardship and management of natural resources. Applications for the award must be postmarked by Aug. 31, 2017, and mailed to Amanda Rosholt at the Oklahoma Farming and Ranching Foundation, located at 2501 N Stiles, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105.

For application information, please visit leopoldconservationaward.org.