



AFR

NEWS & VIEWS

"The Voice of Family Agriculture"

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A Culture of Giving



AFR/OFU has been supporting young livestock showmen and show-women through the Oklahoma Youth Expo for decades. As OYE celebrates its 100th year, we are proud to continue our support for students like Rylee Simpson, Locust Grove, in their pursuit of a great show season. See page 20 for more about Rylee's journey to the show ring. *Staff photo*

EPA Advisory Board Bill Introduced into U.S. House

Oklahoma's 3rd district Congressman Frank Lucas and Congressman Collin Peterson (D-Minn.) recently introduced H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015, legislation to ensure the science guiding EPA's regulatory policy is objective, independent and available for public review. The bipartisan bill establishes guidelines for membership to the Science Advisory Board, which advises the EPA's regulatory decisions. Companion legislation was also introduced in the Senate by Sens. John Boozman (R-Ark.) and Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.).

"I appreciate Congressman Peterson joining me in this bipartisan effort to ensure the best experts are free to undertake a balanced and open review of regulatory science. The Science Advisory Board (SAB) informs the EPA on regulations that impact the lives of millions of Americans," said Congressman Lucas. "The heavy costs of these regulations warrant some degree of public oversight to ensure SAB's findings are free from bias or conflicts of interest and not simply provided by a set of handpicked advisors. The EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act addresses these issues by ensuring the science guiding EPA's regula-

Nat'l Ag Coalition Urges Congress to Reject Farm Bill Budget Cuts

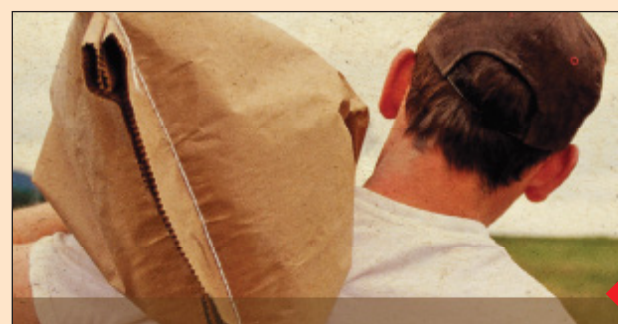
National Farmers Union (NFU) and a coalition of nearly 400 organizations representing family farmers and ranchers, agribusiness, food banks, environmental and faith-based organizations urged U.S. Senate and House leaders to reject all calls for additional cuts to the 2014 Farm Bill. "The 2014 Farm Bill required over three years of debate in both chambers of Congress and ul-

timately ended with the consolidation of over 100 programs and cuts to mandatory spending across many titles, including the elimination of the direct payment program," noted a letter, sent to the chairman and ranking member of the Senate and House Budget Committees. "These cuts came in addition to those already in effect due to sequestration." The letter stated the bipartisan

Farm Bill was estimated to contribute \$23 billion to deficit reduction over 10 years, when including sequestration. "These difficult cuts were made across the farm safety net, conservation programs, and nutrition programs." The signatories underscored their united opposition to re-opening any title of the Farm

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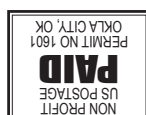


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Industry

Nat'l Dietary Advisory Report Submitted

Contributed by
STEVE THOMPSON
Policy & Membership Coordinator

The 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee submitted a "Scientific Advisory Report" to the Secretaries of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in February. The purpose of the report is to inform the federal agencies on topics related to diet, nutrition, and health. It provides them with a foundation for developing national nutrition policy. They will determine how it will use the information in the report as they jointly develop the final 2015 Dietary

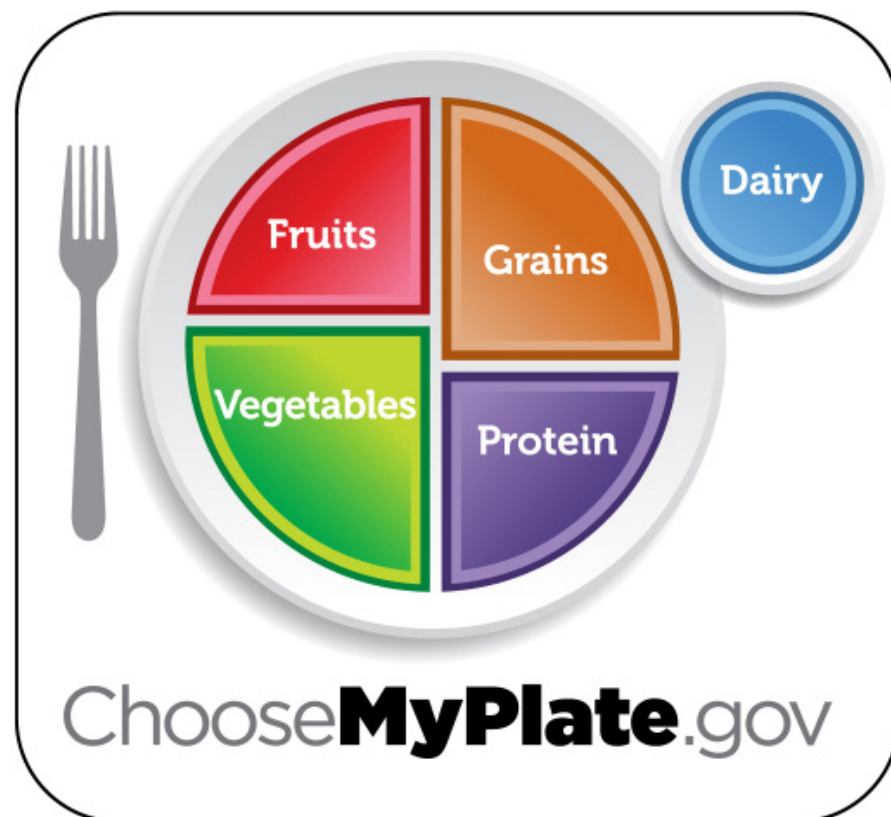
"We encourage the U.S. Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee to utilize the abundant and thorough evidence suggesting that Americans should consume a balanced diet rich in nutrients which includes lean meats and dairy products."

2015 AFR/OFU Policy Book

Guidelines later this year.

The report recommended Americans eat less meat, watch their sodium intake, and start thinking about the environment more. It also removed a 40-year-old warning against eating foods high in cholesterol, like eggs and shrimp. "The overall body of evidence examined by the 2015 DGAC identifies that a healthy dietary pattern is higher in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low- or non-fat dairy, seafood, legumes, and nuts; moderate in alcohol (among adults); lower in red and processed meat; and low in sugar-sweetened foods and drinks and refined grains," the report says.

One noteworthy detail is that the committee, for the first time, is including "the impact of food production, processing and consumption on environmental sustainability" in its recommendations. "Linking health, dietary guidance, and the environment will promote human health and the sustainability of natural resources and ensure current and long-term food security," the committee says. The recommendations—and what



Visit ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information on dietary guidelines suggested by the United States Department of Agriculture. *ChooseMyPlate.gov photo*

HHS and USDA ultimately decides to adopt—are used to set food policy for major institutions and schools.

The report removes a 40-year-old warning against eating foods high in cholesterol, like eggs and shrimp.

Those policies in turn serve as a guide for everyone who does busi-

ness with government offices, other big institutions or schools.

The 2015 AFR/OFU Policy Statement (page 1, line 8) reads: We encourage the United States Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee to utilize the abundant and thorough evidence suggesting that Americans should consume a balanced diet rich in nutrients which includes lean meats and dairy products.

State News Update

Contributed by
STEVE THOMPSON
Policy & Membership Coordinator



Regional Conservation Partnership Program

On January 16, the Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC), USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) announced three far reaching conservation projects. They will be funded by a new program called the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) where state and federal funding is leveraged with private dollars to address regional conservation efforts. USDA will award more than \$370 million for 115 high-impact projects across the country. The funding was made possible through passage of the 2014 Farm Bill. Two OCC-led projects will assist farmers and ranchers with installing conservation practices in the Elk City Lake and Grand Lake watersheds and the OACD-led project will establish conservation demonstration farms across the state.



U.S. Ag Secretary Visits Oklahoma

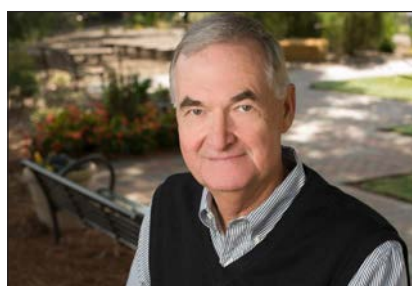
On January 30, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack and former House Ag Committee Chairman Frank Lucas discussed the 2014 Farm Bill and its impact on Oklahoma during a special event at Redlands Community College in El Reno.

"I appreciate Secretary Vilsack joining me in this forum to discuss the Farm Bill and address the legislation's implementation with constituents," said Congressman Lucas. "I am proud of the work we did and look forward to working with the Secretary in continuing to effectively implement the important reforms included in this Farm Bill."

The event was held to mark the one-year anniversary of the enactment of the 2014 Farm Bill. Around 200 people, including a dozen AFR members, were in attendance.

"I am glad to be in Oklahoma today to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the Farm Bill," said

Secretary Vilsack. "This bill has provided much needed disaster relief and reformed programs to better help farmers manage risk. I want to thank Chairman Lucas once again for his hard work in getting this bipartisan bill through Congress and to the President's desk."



Peanut Commission Selects New Executive

Ron Sholar has been appointed Executive Director of the Oklahoma Peanut Commission (OPC). Sholar comes to the OPC after having served as Executive Director of the Great Plains Canola Association. Previously he was a Professor of Agronomy and Extension Agronomist at Oklahoma State University. As OPC Executive Director, Sholar will be engaged with all sectors of the peanut industry in conducting programs that support research, promotion, and education.

Sholar replaces Mike Kubicek who is retiring after 22 years as the OPC's Executive Director. Sholar

earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Tennessee at Martin and master's and doctoral degrees from Oklahoma State University. He and his wife Linda live in Stillwater.



CareerTech Director Named

On January 16, Marcie Mack was elevated to state director by the Oklahoma Board of Career and Technology Education. Her new role began February 1. Mack was named interim director when Robert Sommers resigned in July 2014, after a term of only 16 months. She began working at the state department in July 2013 as deputy director and chief operating officer. She previously served as assistant superintendent at Autry Technology Center in Enid.



Keep up with legislative news with the Insider eNewsletter. To get on the list, email drogers@afmic.com.

Industry

Rural Opportunity Bill Benefits Oklahoma



Located in Choctaw County in southeastern Oklahoma, Hugo could benefit from a rural opportunity zone program because of its proximity to Texas. *lat34north.com photo*

Contributed by
STEVE THOMPSON
Policy & Membership Coordinator

A bill that would create Rural Opportunity Zones in counties across the state is working its way through the Oklahoma Legislature this spring. House Bill 1747, by state Rep. Tom Newell (Seminole), allows for the creation of 25 Rural Opportunity Zones across the state. For taxable years beginning in 2016, this legislation would allow for a five-year income tax exemption for anyone who moves from out-of-state into a county projected to see a population loss between the effective date and 2075 per a 2012 Oklahoma Department of Commerce study.

“Population loss is detrimental to not only rural Oklahoma, but the entire state,” said Newell. “A vibrant, rural Oklahoma is essential for the overall health of the state.”

“This legislation creates a tool that helps community leaders recruit doctors, nurses, teachers and other professionals as well as skilled workers. Many of these counties compete directly with Texas and rural counties in Kansas, which has its own version of Rural Opportunity Zones.”

Speaker of the House Jeff Hickman, from Fairview in northwest Oklahoma, is a supporter of the zones and said it can only benefit the entire state to see economic conditions improve in rural areas. “More than anything, rural Oklahoma

needs people,” Hickman said. “This bill is a great tool that will bring new residents to our state whose investments will result in more revenue for sales tax and property tax that benefits all of Oklahoma – urban and rural – and more than exceeds the amount of the exemption. I appreciate Rep. Newell’s leadership on this issue as we look for more ways to sell families and companies outside our state on Oklahoma’s wonderful quality of life and low cost-of-living and invite them to call Oklahoma home.”

Co-authors of the legislation are: Speaker Hickman; Scott Biggs, Chickasha; Dennis Johnson, Duncan; Casey Murdock, Felt; Charles Ortega, Altus; John Pfeiffer, Orlando; and Mike Sanders, Kingfisher.

“The passage of House Bill 1747 is important to communities all over Oklahoma,” Sanders said. “In my part of the state in northwest Oklahoma, it can be a challenge to recruit new skilled professionals and businesses to our wonderful communities. The creation of these Rural Opportunity Zones will entice new activity in my district and I am confident it will produce great results.”

“As the population of rural Oklahoma ages, it is important to provide opportunities for new blood,” Pfeiffer said. “These Rural Opportunity Zones will be another example and incentive for people who want to relocate to rural counties throughout the state.”

and ranchers, because it provided them with much-needed stability and also a huge win for taxpayers who will realize real savings from the budget cuts made by the legislation,” said NFU President Roger Johnson. “The Farm Bill has been debated and passed, and should be left alone.”

Hampton Honored by Pork Council



After more than 15 years of advocating for the Oklahoma agricultural industry, AFR/OFU member Joe Neal Hampton has been honored with the Oklahoma Pork Council Distinguished Service Award.

Joe Neal Hampton spent some tough years advocating for Roberts Ranch of Oklahoma in the Oklahoma Legislature. When the regulations of the late 90s took effect and stopped expansion of Oklahoma’s pork industry and Roberts Ranch began to have troubles with the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, Hampton was hired to help.

“Joe Neal helped us with things dealing with the legislators in our area and our county commissioners with our roads,” said Jeff Mencke,

Roberts Ranch of Oklahoma’s sow production manager. “It was a very beneficial relationship from that standpoint. In our area it was very important that we continue to build relationships with the people that were influential and could get the word out that we are a good company and do the right thing.”

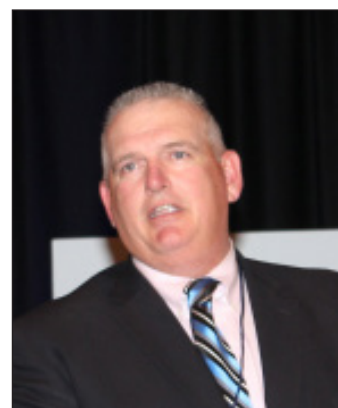
Not only does Hampton give thanks for his mentors, but people give thanks to him for helping them to learn more about how to deal with people. His ease of conversation helped others to learn to talk to people in the same fashion.

“What I learned from Hampton was that a natural style and ease of dealing with people was more beneficial than the so-called hard sell,” Mencke said.

Throughout the years that Hampton worked with Roberts Ranch and with the pork industry in Oklahoma, he continued to be helpful with issues throughout agriculture. He continued to attempt to bring the different agricultural sectors together and he believed in seeing the different agricultural groups supporting each other.

“I am very honored,” Hampton said. “I am very humbled. It’s hard to imagine the industry folks thought that much of me. I just really can’t believe it. And I appreciate it.”

Morris Serving Nat’l Beef Board



AFR/OFU member, Brett Morris, Ninnekah, is serving as the secretary/treasurer of the national Cattleman’s Beef Board.

Morris is a third-generation dairy farmer and runs a dairy, cow/calf and stocker operation, as well as the Washita Fertilizer Company, in partnership with his father. They have a diversified farm operation, including 1,000 acres of alfalfa, wheat and grassland, 65 registered Holstein cows for milking, 100-125 beef cows, and 200 stocker calves. Morris was

nominated to the Beef Board by the Dairy Farmers of America (DFA), and is very active in industry and community activities. He has served as chairman of the Oklahoma Dairy Commission, vice chairman of the Oklahoma John’s Advisory Committee, as a district voting delegate to DFA and as vice chairman of the Oklahoma Beef Council, on which he has served since 2005. He previously served on the checkoff’s Joint Retail Committee as a representative for the Federation of State Beef Councils, was president of the Oklahoma Holstein Association, and was active in the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives. In addition to DFA, Morris is a member of AFR/OFU, the Oklahoma Cattlemen’s Association, Holstein Association of America and Oklahoma Holstein Association.

In his community, Morris is a member of the Woodland Hills Baptist Church and has served as a judge for the Arizona State Fair, the Sooner State Dairy Show and for FFA events.

Continued from FARM BILL CUTS, 1

Bill during the consideration of the 2016 Budget Resolution and urged both chambers to refrain from including reconciliation instructions to the respective committees with oversight duties for the Farm Bill.

“The 2014 Farm Bill was a great victory for America’s family farmers

Industry

Policy Committee Presents 2015 Highlights

Contributed by
STEVE THOMPSON
Policy & Membership Coordinator

The 2015 AFR/OFU Policy Committee met three times over five days in January and February to compile a revised comprehensive proposed policy statement. During the 110th AFR/OFU State Convention delegates unanimously adopted the following policy changes.

For the complete AFR/OFU policy statement, visit www.iafr.com or contact Steve Thompson at (405)218-5563 or sthompson@afmic.com.

We encourage the U.S. Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee to utilize the abundant and thorough evidence suggesting that Americans should consume a balanced diet rich in nutrients which includes lean meats and dairy products.

We support efforts to maximize the amount of dollars appropriated in the farm bill for the purpose of farm program payments to help farmers and ranchers.

“We oppose any Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposal now, or in the future, to expand jurisdiction in a federal takeover of all waters in the U.S. All necessary action should be taken to preserve the water rights of the individual citizen and prevent further usurpation of those rights.”

2015 AFR/OFU Policy Book

We support animal welfare, as opposed to animal rights. We support scientifically sound methods of herdsmanhip and the continued use of technological advancements in livestock production for American meat producers to efficiently supply protein to the world. We oppose any encroachment on traditional animal production practices.

We support a match of state money from the rainy day fund or a bond issue for the Oklahoma Conservation Commission to match currently available federal funding.



Members of the 2015 AFR/OFU Policy Committee were (left to right): Tommy Thomas, AFR lobbyist; Paul Jackson, AFR/OFU State Secretary; Kermit Raab, Custer County; Chairman Phil Berkenbile, Noble County; Phil Whitworth, Tillman County; Ray Miller, Pittsburg County; Terry Detrick, AFR/OFU President; AJ Bristow, AFR/OFU Southeast Area Field Rep; Harvey Schroeder, Tillman County; Glen Schickedanz, Woodward County; Steve Thompson, AFR/OFU Policy & Membership Development Coordinator. *Staff photo*

We commend the Honorable Frank Lucas for his leadership, as chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Agriculture Committee, to develop farm policy which recognizes the issues relevant to Oklahoma farmers and ranchers and those of the nation. We further commend Representatives Cole and Mullin for their support of Congressman Lucas in his efforts in passing the Agricultural Act of 2014.

“We urge that state prison facilities be maintained to meet present and future needs, including prison population, with adequate staffing levels and competitive compensation for employees.”

2015 AFR/OFU Policy Book

We commend Congressman Lucas and the United States House of Representatives Agriculture Committee for amending the Internal Revenue Code to create a 501(c)(3) organization to conduct agricultural research and advance agriculture through public and private tax-exempt donations.

We support one credit hour of general agriculture be included as a high school graduation requirement and a similar requirement in the curriculum at any Oklahoma land grant institution.

“We believe only U.S. citizens should be eligible to receive Social Security benefits, but non-citizens lawfully working with a visa or work permit should be required to pay into the Social Security system.”

2015 AFR/OFU Policy Book

We encourage the Oklahoma Dept. of Transportation to work with property owners to find common sense solutions when disputes arise over highway signage regulations.

We support reasonable reform of Oklahoma Transportation laws regarding increasing weights and measures when transporting farm commodities.

We encourage drivers age 55 and older to take a safe driving course in order to receive additional insurance policy discounts.

We support restoration of land to the original condition at the request of landowners following oil, gas, or mineral or electricity production and/or transmission activity.

We oppose any attempts by oil, gas and wind power companies to exempt their production equipment from tax rolls.

“To relieve the ad valorem burden on landowners and to support and enhance schools and local and county governments, we support the measurement and appropriate taxation of all types of energy production that leave the State of Oklahoma.”

2015 AFR/OFU Policy Book

We support efficiencies in all state agencies. We object to the state legislature removing money from state agency revolving funds to balance the budget; particularly, from non-appropriated state agencies whose funds are received from entities they regulate, not state tax revenue.

Continued from EPA REFORM, 1



tory policy is open to review by the public and requiring members who serve on this board to disclose their professional backgrounds.”

“The Science Advisory Board’s work is important to making sure the EPA

considers all scientific information when writing regulations that will impact American farmers, families and small businesses. This legislation builds on the work done in the 2014 Farm Bill and is necessary to ensure the EPA takes into account the best information possible, with input from the public and independent stakeholders. A balanced and independent Science Advisory Board will help alleviate some of the unintended consequences surrounding

EPA regulations,” said Congressman Peterson.

AFR welcomes these proposed reforms in EPA rulemaking. Under the bill, nominees to the SAB would be required to disclose financial relationships such as contracts and grants they receive from the EPA. With dark clouds of controversy surrounding many recent federal regulatory proposals, such as EPA’s “Waters of the U.S.” rule, transparency is needed now more than ever.

Industry

DID YOU KNOW

EVERY **DOLLAR INVESTED*** RETURNS **\$11.20?**



Beef Safety Research

Identifies potential risks to beef safety and develops solutions to maintain a safe beef supply for consumers



Public Relations

Proactively shares positive beef messages with consumers, health professionals and other food influencers



Product Enhancement Research

Discovers new ways to improve beef quality, consistency and value, including research focused on new cuts, taste, tenderness and carcass value



New Product Development

Works with industry leaders to develop new beef products, plus shares beef recipes and cooking tips



Advertising

Creates all domestic consumer advertising –radio, print, outdoor and digital – to reinforce how beef is part of their everyday life



Foreign Marketing

Provides beef market development, promotion, research, consumer and industry information in more than 100 countries worldwide



Channel Marketing

Develops all promotions, training and other programs to help promote beef in restaurants and grocery stores



Nutrition Research

Focuses on beef's role in human nutrition as it relates to overall health and well-being



Industry Information

Safeguards the image of the beef industry by responding to, and correcting, misinformation about beef and sharing the beef production story

*From the Cattlemen's Beef Board budget

GET TO KNOW
YOUR CHECKOFF

MyBeefCheckoff.com



Funded by the Beef Checkoff.

SHARE
THE FACTS



#beef11:1

Insurance

Insurance Department Gives Severe Weather Prep Advice



Information provided by
OKLAHOMA INSURANCE DEPT.
www.OK.gov/OID

The start of spring traditionally marks the start of severe weather season and an increased risk of property damage from wind, rain, hail, floods and tornadoes. This year is already shaping up to be no different.

The first steps to prepare for spring storms is to conduct an insurance checkup to make certain an individual or business has the right coverage and for the right amounts.

Three questions should be asked:

- 1) What type of coverage do I have?
- 2) How much coverage do I need?
- 3) What are my discounts and deductibles?

If you are a victim of severe weather damage, take the following advice for dealing with damage.

What if Your Home is Damaged?

- 1) Call your insurance company or agent with your policy number and all relevant information as soon as possible. Cooperate fully, asking what forms, documents and data you will need to provide in order to process your claim.
- 2) Take photos/video of the damage.
- 3) Make the necessary repairs to prevent further damage to the property (for instance, covering broken windows, leaking roofs and damaged walls), but do not have permanent repairs made until your insurance company has inspected the property and you have reached an agreement with them on the cost of appropriate repairs.
- 4) Save all receipts, including those from the temporary repairs that may be covered by your insurance policy.
- 5) If your home is damaged to the

extent that it is unlivable, ask your insurance provider if you have coverage for living expenses incurred while repairs are being made. Save all receipts to document these costs.

What Damage to Your Home is Covered?

Damages caused by wind, wind-driven rain, trees or other falling objects, and the collapse of a structure are covered under most standard homeowners policies. However, you should review your individual insurance contract to determine specific coverage and exclusions. Check your policy and call your insurance agent or company for clarification with specific questions.

What Damage to Your Home is Not Covered?

The following weather-related events are usually not covered by standard homeowners policies:

- Interior storm-water damage when there was no damage to the home's roof or walls
- Flood damages
- Removal of fallen trees from the property, unless those trees land on and damage the roof and walls of the home
- Food spoilage due to power outages
- Water damage from backed-up drains or sewers

You should also take steps to protect your personal safety as the severe storm season nears. More information on preparing before an emergency strikes can be found on the Office of Emergency Management's website: www.oem.ok.gov.

The Oklahoma Insurance Department, an agency of the State of Oklahoma, is responsible for the education and protection of the insurance-buying public and for oversight of the insurance industry in the state.

Tomlinson OKC Claim Rep of the Year



Kim Tomlinson, an AFR Insurance claims supervisor, was recently named the Oklahoma City Claim Association 2014 Claim Representative of the Year by the Oklahoma City Claim Association (OCCA).

Each year, OCCA presents the award as voted on by the members of the organization. Contenders are selected from nominations by members of the association.

Tomlinson has worked at AFR for more than 17 years. Originally from Shattuck, she joined the company as a claims clerk after earning a business degree from Southwestern Oklahoma State University.

Tomlinson has earned the Associates in Claims and Certified Professional Insurance Woman designations. She has been involved in the Insurance Women's Association and is currently serving on the Oklahoma Claims Association board as past president. OCCA is an organization of insurance professionals in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area with a membership of around 112 individuals.



Insurance

AFR Hosts Agents at Open House

Story by

CHRIS CAMPBELL

Director of Marketing & Agency Relations

More than 120 agents gathered in Oklahoma City for an open house hosted in AFR's new home office on Will Rogers Parkway March 19. The event was a great way to introduce agents statewide to the company's new facility, as well as the employees' cooking skills.

The first event of its kind in several years, AFR employees went all out to host the agents. They were treated to lunch and a self-guided tour of the building where they were able to learn about the different departments and reconnect with home office employees. Most importantly, the tour helped agents connect names to faces in every department. They also earned marketing gifts and giveaways along the tour.

Following lunch and tours, agents heard from the AFR Board of Directors. Board members discussed the investment strategies and audit results of the company. Through this interaction, board members and agents were able to celebrate a great year together.

Agents were given additional information on the new "Portal" system they test drove at this year's AFR/OFU State Convention. The "Portal" is currently in development stages and will be guided by input from the agents at every step to ensure maximum utility and ease-of-use.

Our agents are our driving force and part of what makes AFR a unique and exceptional company. They are our first and best connection to customers and do a great job of representing AFR Insurance statewide. It is the goal of the AFR leadership team to create a company-agent relationship that fosters positive two-way communication and professional growth.

At the request of the agents, AFR will continue to host open houses and other networking events, encouraging complete transpar-

ency and an increased sense of community among our agent force, our home office and field employees, and the AFR leadership team.



AFR/OFU Vice President John Porter (second from left) and AFR board members (left to right) Joe Ed Kinder, Frederick; Roy Perryman, Stigler; Jim Shelton, Vinita; Justin Cowan, Locust Grove; Bob Holley, Antlers; and Mike Humble, Cache, prepared drinks and helped agents to their tables during the open house. *Staff photo*



AFR CEO Richard Herren talks about the future plans of the company. *Staff photo*



AFR Claims Director Chad Yearwood poses with agents Elizabeth Brown (left) and Jo Scott (right). *Staff photo*



Agent Paul Maly connects with AFR Underwriter Pam Arensdorf while agent Neil Bolenbaugh and Vice President John Porter talk in the background. *Staff photo*



AFR Marketing & Agency Relations Director Chris Campbell discusses marketing strategies with the crowd. *Staff photo*



Director Justin Cowan discusses financials with agents. *Staff photo*



AFR Insurance employees prepared and cooked all the meat for the luncheon. *Staff photo*



The open house drew a large crowd of agents, giving them a great opportunity to build relationships between agencies. *Staff photo*

Insurance

Agents Recognized at Annual Luncheon

AFR announced the top agents for 2014 at its Agent Recognition Luncheon Feb. 13.

The agents listed have the highest profitability for the last three years combined.

Steven Sockey, Sockey Insurance, Stigler, Okla.

Becky Ricks, Ricks & James Insurance Agency, McAlester, Okla.

Oma Gay Nichols, Nichols Agency, Fairview/Ringwood/Helena, Okla.

Paula Vinzetta, Vinzetta Agency, Haileyville, Okla.

David Alexander, Alexander Insurance Agency, Poteau, Okla.

Keith Miller, Clements Insurance Agency, Lindsay, Okla.

Neil Bolenbaugh, Bolenbaugh Insurance Agency, Enid, Okla.

Paul Fields, Minks Insurance, Panama, Okla.

Ronnie Burns, Colclazier & Burns Agency, Durant, Okla.

Melissa Robinson, Clayton Insurance Agency, Clayton, Okla.

Donna Ramsey, Ramsey Insurance Agency, Checotah, Okla.

Justin Cowan, Cowan Insurance Agency, Locust Grove, Okla.

Joni Oller, Oller Insurance Agency, Elmore City, Okla.

Shelli Hembree, Haskell Insurance Agency, Haskell, Okla.

Robert Acre, Acre Agency, Canton, Okla.

Mary Andrews, Mary Andrews Insurance Agency, Heavener, Okla.

Pat Oberste, Oberste Insurance,

Sallisaw, Okla.

Robert Swanda, Swanda Insurance Agency, Apache, Okla.

Norma Reed, Reed Insurance Agency, Wilburton, Okla.

Pamela Livingston, Livingston Insurance Agency, Seiling, Okla.

Marlo Barnes, Campbell's Insurance Agency, Pryor, Okla.

Ida Kilburn, Kilburn Agency, West Siloam Springs, Okla.

Keith Swan, Swan Insurance Agency, Bartlesville, Okla.

Aaron Mitchell, Mitchell Insurance, Ralston/Pawnee, Okla.

Greg Clement, Greg Clement Agency, Madill, Okla.

Terry Detrick, Terry Detrick Agency, Lahoma, Okla.

Melodie Schaffer, Pearman Insurance, Thackerville, Okla.

Kermit Maynard, Maynard Insurance Agency, Wapanucka, Okla.

Janet Robinson, Robinson Agency, Hollis, Okla.

Jimmy James, Storehouse Services, Altus/Snyder, Okla.

Brandon Higgins, Higgins Insurance Group, Tishomingo, Okla.

Willie Ratterman, Ratterman's Insurance Agency, Minco, Okla.

Terri Rogers, Rogers Insurance Agency, Anadarko, Okla.

Ernie Taylor, RE McGuire Insurance Agency, Hugo, Okla.

Sharron Barnes, Pryor Insurance Agency, Mannsville, Okla.

Jo Nell York, Jo Nell York Agency, Durham, Okla.

James Stinnett, Teel Insurance



Steven Sockey, Stigler, stands for recognition with AFR CEO Richard Herren and Oklahoma Insurance Commissioner John Doak during the 2015 AFR Agent Recognition Luncheon at the 110th annual AFR/OFU State Convention. Staff photo

Agency, Grove, Okla.

Nick Hoffschulte, Cook Agency, Miami, Okla.

Veva Duagherty, Daugherty Agency, Watonga, Okla.

Vicky Allbritten, Allbritten Insurance Agency, Sulphur, Okla.

Pat Lane, Lane Insurance Agency, Konawa, Okla.

Jim Barrett, James Barrett Insurance Agency, Wilson, Okla.

Franklin Nault, Franklin D. Nault, Okeene, Okla.

Paul Maly, Paul Maly Agency, Garber, Okla.

John Millikan, Secondine Insurance, Vinita, Okla.

Linda Harper, Harper Insurance Agency, Marietta, Okla.

Steven Blair, Thrasher Insurance/Blair Group, Laverne, Okla.

Crystie Shebester, Taylor-Shebester Agency, Chickasha, Okla.

Charles Porter, Porter Agency, Stillwater, Okla.

Roy Bryant, Celeste Looney Insurance Agency, Tahlequah, Okla.

Lanna Harris, Harris Insurance Agency, Duncan, Okla.

Terry Kirkland, Terry Kirkland Agency, Waurika, Okla.

Dawn Gay Brooks, Brooks Agency, Alva/Cherokee, Okla.

David Kolker, Kolker Insurance, Elgin, Okla.

Jo Scott, Jo Scott Agency, Cyril, Okla.

James Carson, Peoples Commercial Insurance Agency, Stilwell, Okla.

Brenda Lane, Cagle Insurance Agency, Langley, Okla.

Scott Goss, Our Hometown Agency, Eldorado, Okla.

Kendall Dorsey, Dorsey Insurance Agency, Claremore, Okla.

Jennifer Davis, Davis Tag & Insurance Agency, Davis, Okla.

LaMoyné Hardin, Hardin Insurance Agency, Guthrie, Okla.

Jessy Barger, Weatherford Insurance Agency, Weatherford, Okla.

Kimberlee Kidwell, Kimberlee Kidwell Agency, Geary, Okla.

AFR Recognizes Retiring Agents



Royce Meek

Royce Meek became an agent with OFU on Jan. 1, 1983 and retired Jan. 1, 2014. He has held various local and county offices—board member, secretary/treasurer and vice president. He also served as State Secretary from 2000 to 2009.

“Over these 32 years, I have been privileged to serve in several capacities,” said Meek. “I began as a young agent with black hair and lots of it and now I have regressed to an old gray-haired man with very little of it.”

“Through the years there have been a couple of constants. Though

there have been tough challenges, our home office staff has remained the most friendly, helpful and efficient I have ever dealt with. They have always gone the extra mile in their service to our customers and agents. Second, our agents are the best. All are good men and women of character and dedication, serving their communities while professionally representing AFR.

“I am grateful I had the opportunity to know you all and share a little time with you.”



E.J. Tolbert

E.J. Tolbert became an agent

with OFU on Jan. 1, 1983 and retired March 7, 2014. Tolbert has held county offices of president, vice president and secretary/treasurer. He has served continuously for 30 years; serving in each office several times and currently serves as county president.

“My career began with Farm Bureau, Johnston Co., in 1980,” said Tolbert. “I joined OFU in 1983 and served in Johnston County Farmers Union offices continually over the next 30 years.”

“At the state union level, I served on the policy council and joined in Washington fly-ins in the 1990s. I served the AFR Life Company as a general agent for nine counties in central Oklahoma until the company sold.

“I have enjoyed my time with AFR/OFU and have never missed a convention in 32 years. I hope to continue for many more years.”



John Patton

John Patton became an agent in 1985 and retired Feb. 27, 2014. He has held the office of Alfalfa County Vice President and was an auctioneer and delegate at the state convention.

“My most memorable moment was when John Ford came to Cherokee and drove through high water outside of town,” said Patton. “It sucked his engine full of water and he had to wait in Cherokee until someone from the home office drove to Cherokee to get him. But, of course, it wasn't his fault.”

Insurance

Agent Fosters Culture of Giving

Information Provided by
CHRIS CAMPBELL

Director of Marketing & Agency Relations

When agents Roy Bryant and Brandi Barnett posed with the showmanship winners of this year's Cherokee County Junior Livestock Show, it wasn't their first year, their fifth year, or even their twentieth year to proudly support the students standing next to them. It is actually much closer to their fortieth year. You read that right. The Celeste Looney Agency has been sponsoring the same event for at least 35 years.

"...I was busy. The years were rolling on and I didn't pay any attention."

Celeste Looney
Long-time AFR Agent

The best the agency can figure out is that the showmanship sponsorship started in 1980, although the Oklahoma State Extension Service thinks it's been longer.

Celeste Looney herself doesn't worry too much about what year this event, or any other, started. "This is pure guess work because I was busy," she said. "The years were rolling on and I didn't pay any attention."

While the years may have rolled by, Looney still remembers the beginning of the showmanship award.

"I started out at the old sale barn which was the only facility we had for stock shows and 4-H," she said. "They had their shows down in the show ring.

"When I decided these kids ought



Long-time agent Celeste Looney played an integral role in developing the culture of the Oklahoma Farmers Union and has spent her lifetime investing in the Tahlequah community. She received the Meritorious Service Award in 2000. *Staff photo*

to get trophies like kids did in other places, I just ordered them and

"It's unbelievable how many trophies I gave away!"

Celeste Looney
Long-time AFR Agent

picked out three of the fathers in the building to judge. They probably were judging their own kids!"

Looney also recalls the year the stock show was dedicated to her.

"When I looked at the brochure there was my picture on the front," she said. "But, I had so much help from the community."

Through the years, Looney also gave trophies to a local speech contest she helped start and the Cherokee County Speech Contest, one practically as big as the state competition.

Turn to **LOONEY, 22**

AFR Tech Donates to Science Museum



Contributed by
DAVID MYERS
AFR Technology Services

The AFR Technology Services department recently donated sixteen desktop computers and two tape drives to the "Tinkering Garage" exhibit at the Oklahoma Science Museum (OSM). The donation will aid in the resurgence of this hands-on, educational program by giving a boost to the exhibits capabilities.

"We are pleased to get this donation from AFR. We have many plans and ideas of where we want to go with this program and this donation will help make a few of those ideas and plans actually happen," said Trevor Taylor, developer of the new Tinkering Garage format.

OSM considers tinkering the "process of adapting, changing or adjusting in hopes of making improvements." The concept is not new—some of the greatest thinkers and inventors in history got their start tinkering.

OSM wonders: "Where would we be today without Leonardo da Vinci's sketches and inventions or Wilbur and Orville Wright's experimentation in engineering and aerodynamics? Many of our inventions, innovations and technological advancements are a result of tinkering."

The Tinkering Garage focuses on children ages 6–14. Several hundred visitors each day will learn by tinkering in the "garage."

AFR has an extensive history of supporting youth programs in Oklahoma. Small niche donations like this one are a new opportunity to benefit Oklahoma youth and keep additional used electronics out of local landfills.



Cherokee County Jr. Livestock Show 2015 Showmanship Award

Agent Roy Bryant (right) and his daughter, agent Brandi Barnett (left) pose with this year's Cherokee County Junior Livestock Show Showmanship winners. *Celeste Looney Agency photo*

Insurance

AFR Recognizes Top Life Agents

Former CEO Honored at 2015 Convention



The 2014 AFR Life Company top agents were recognized at the annual Agent Recognition Luncheon at the 110th AFR/OFU State Convention Feb. 13. Pictured is the first place 2014 Top Life Producer, Johnie Brown of the Brown Insurance Agency in Sapulpa, Okla. Not pictured are Leda Canada, of the Gilbert Insurance Agency in Tecumseh, Okla., who came in second place and Crystie Shebester, of the Taylor-Shebester Insurance Agency in Chickasha, Okla., who came in third. *Staff photo*



AFR Insurance CEO Richard Herren (right) recognized former CEO Brian Baxter at the 2015 AFR/OFU Convention. Baxter left the company in December 2014 to return to Nebraska. In 2012, Brian Baxter rejoined AFR Insurance as its CEO. He had previously worked as OFU's Chief Operating Officer, improving the organization's financial soundness during his tenure. Baxter brought a wealth of business knowledge to AFR and left the company with a footing that is much more financially sound. *Staff photo*

The 2015 Women's Committee thanks everyone for their involvement in the "Drive Away Hunger with AFR" canned food drive!

Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma
Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma

Heart of Oklahoma Insurance Agency

Purcell Local Food Bank
 Delta Community Action Fund
Allbritten Insurance Agency
 Sulphur Local Food Bank
 Faith Center Harvest Basket

Greg Clement Agency

Madill Local Food Bank
 Family Christian Center Madill

Ratterman's Insurance Agency

Minco Local Food Bank
 First Assembly of God Minco

Richey Insurance Agency

Blanchard Local Food Bank
 First Baptist Church Blanchard

Taylor-Shebester Insurance Agency

Chickasha Local Food Bank
 First Baptist Church Chickasha

All-County Insurance

Earlsboro Local Food Bank
 Highland COC Tecumseh

Gilbert Insurance Agency

Tecumseh Local Food Bank
 Highland COC Tecumseh

Harper Insurance Agency

Marietta Local Food Bank
 Mercy Health Love County

Storehouse Services

Snyder Local Food Bank
 Hobart Area Ministerial FP



Krieger Insurance Agency

Hobart Local Food Bank
 Hobart Area Ministerial FP

AFR Field Representative Pete McDaniel

Apache Local Food Bank
 Ministerial Alliance Apache

Porters Insurance Agency

Edmond Local Food Bank
 Route 66 Project

Redlands Community College Aggie Club

El Reno Local Food Bank
 The Lord's Harvest

Neher Insurance Agency

Oklahoma City Local Food Bank
 St. James St. Vincent de Paul

Richey Insurance

Oklahoma City Local Food Bank
 St. James St. Vincent de Paul

Ludwig Insurance Agency

Okarche Local Food Bank
 The Center of Family Love

Graham Insurance

Marlow Local Food Bank
 The Marlow Samaritans

Lively Insurance Agency

Woodward Local Food Bank
 Woodward Families Helping Families

AFR Corporate Office Employees

Oklahoma City Food Bank
 Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma

Brown Insurance Agency

Sapulpa Local Food Bank
 Caring Community Friends

Haskell Insurance Agency

Haskell Local Food Bank
 Ezra House

Miller Insurance Agency

Antlers Local Food Bank
 First Baptist Church Antlers

Rowe Insurance Agency

Wagoner Local Food Bank
 Wagoner Area Neighbors

Cleveland Insurance Agency

Cleveland Local Food Bank

Cleveland Area Community Food Bank

AFR/OFU Agent Association

Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma
 Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma

For more information on volunteer initiatives, contact FLP Coordinator Megan Albright at (405) 218-5416 or malbright@afrmic.com.

Membership

“Drive Away Hunger with AFR” Campaign Continues to Fuel Local Food Banks

Information provided by
MEGAN ALBRIGHT
FLP Coordinator

The 2015 AFR/OFU Women’s Committee, Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma and the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma have teamed up to host a year-long state-wide food drive initiative to help in the fight against hunger. The Committee has set a goal for members to donate 50,000 meals in 2015.

Hunger is closer to home than many realize. More than 624,000 Oklahomans struggle with hunger daily, the majority being the working poor, seniors and children, with less than twenty percent considered to be unemployed.

“This initiative is about changing the face of rural Oklahoma and making sure that in a state where growing food is one of the top industries, no one goes without something to

eat,” said Suzanne Gilbert, Committee Chair.

Great Effort, Great Result

The “Drive Away Hunger with AFR” campaign kicked off January 19 - 30, focusing on local AFR/OFU groups donating canned goods to food banks in their communities. The campaign brought in more than 16,000 meals statewide.

“It was a learning experience and I feel it helped a lot of people. It was amazing the results we had with just a little effort,” said Wayne Ludwig, owner of Ludwig Insurance in Okarche.

For the first canned food drive, the committee offered up a friendly competition between local organizations. The winners were announced at the 2015 AFR/OFU State Convention Women’s Luncheon February 14.

Harper Insurance Agency (Local 741), Marietta, placed first with 2008 donated meals. Porter Insurance Agency (Local 327), Edmond, placed second with 750 donated meals. Gilbert Insurance Agency (Local 522), Tecumseh, placed third with 590 donated meals.

The AFR Agents Association also donated to the canned food drive campaign—\$1,000 to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma and \$1,000 to the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma. Both organizations feed hungry Oklahomans in all 77 counties.

Abundance, From the Ground Up

The Women’s Committee is preparing for the next opportunity. This initiative will feature two unconventional food drives running simultaneously May 1-June 30. The “Invest an Acre” and the “Plant a Row” campaigns are partnerships through the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma and the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma.

The “Invest an Acre” program en-



courages farmers to donate an acre, or any portion of crop proceeds, to help feed families in their community and across the state. For every dollar donated through the program, Monsanto will match it dollar-for-dollar. The proceeds will help provide thousands of healthy meals to the more than 650,000 Oklahomans who are at risk of hunger.

“This initiative is about changing the face of rural Oklahoma and making sure that in a state where growing food is one of the top industries, no one goes without something to eat.”

Suzanne Gilbert
Women’s Committee Chair

Both the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma and the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma provide starter plants for community gardens across the state.

For those not involved in grain production, but want to support the Oklahoma food banks, there is the “Plant a Row” campaign, a “people-helping-people” program that encourages members to donate seed packets to either of the major food banks in Oklahoma. Members can

also participate by going to their local nursery, garden supply store or other retailer and asking the retailer to donate any unsold seed packets, which will be given to the local food banks. Gardeners may donate their old seed packages as well.

Those with green thumbs are also encouraged to plant a little extra in their gardens and donate the abundance to the Oklahoma food banks or a food pantry in their community.

Remember, one in six Oklahomans struggles with hunger every day. Last year, the Oklahoma Food Banks distributed enough food to feed more than 160,000 hungry Oklahomans each week. However, it is not enough. Join AFR/OFU in fighting hunger in Oklahoma.

“It was a learning experience and I feel it helped a lot of people. It was amazing the results we had with just a little effort.”

Wayne Ludwig
Ludwig Agency, Okarche

Please contact AFR/OFU LEAD Coordinator Megan Albright for more details on how to get involved with the “Drive Away Hunger with AFR” campaign at (405) 218-5416 or malbright@afmic.com.



Committee Chair Suzanne Gilbert recognizes Linda Hyman (Harper Insurance Agency - Local 741) as the canned food drive winner at this year’s convention women’s luncheon. Staff photo



Wayne Ludwig’s first gathering of donations awaits pick-up by his local food bank. “I outgrew my red tote!” he said. Ludwig photo



Angela Frew, owner of Cleveland Insurance and president of Pawnee Co. AFR/OFU, presents a \$500 check to the Cleveland Food Pantry as a result of the January canned food drive. Frew photo



The AFR Insurance Agents Association donated \$2,000 to the hunger relief effort. Members are (front row, left to right) Greg Clement, Justin Krieger, Nikki Weekley, Troy Brooks, Donna Ramsey, Kathryn Frazee, (middle row, left to right) Rodney Wright, Roy Bryant, Debi Thompson, Wayne Ludwig, Becky Graham, Eddie Whitworth, (back row, left to right) Kyn-dell Nichols, Robert Acre and David Alexander. Staff photo

Membership

110th Convention Displayed Rich Heritage, Bright Future

Story by
DANIELLE ROGERS
Cooperative Communication Specialist

American Farmers & Ranchers/Oklahoma Farmers Union (AFR/OFU) hosted the organization's 110th annual state convention at the Embassy Suites & Conference Center – Norman Feb. 13-14. The event featured educational speakers and entertainment, the annual business meeting of Oklahoma Farmers Union and AFR Mutual Insurance Company, discussion and adoption of AFR/OFU legislative policy and officer elections. The convention theme was “Rich Heritage, Bright Future.”

This year's entertainment and break-out sessions were regarded as some of the best in many years according to members. Attendees learned about the importance of using social media as an educational tool as well as new technologies focused on increasing the production of farms by utilizing weather tools. Members were most interested in the bylaws changes regarding new federal tax mandates for non-profit organizations and the effects it would have on their locals and counties and voting on these changes.

More than 130 ladies attended the Women's Luncheon. The AFR/OFU Women's Committee planned and facilitated the event with Chairwoman Suzanne Gilbert, Tecumseh,

at the helm. The luncheon featured guest speaker Whitney Danker, the State Advocacy & Public Policy Director for the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma and the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma, who spoke about the importance of helping fight hunger in Oklahoma. Attendees were challenged to volunteer one hour in their local food bank during 2015.

The convention banquet began with music by Oklahoma City native Kyle Dillingham and Horeshoe Road. Dillingham was featured with Roy Clarke and twice on Nashville's Grand Ole Opry. He later toured with western swing legend, Hank Thompson and has earned the title “Oklahoma's Musical Ambassador.” Dillingham and Horseshoe Road were followed by Branson comedian, Jarrett Dougherty. In 1995, Dougherty

gained popularity for his musical and comedic talents and is currently co-starring with county music artist, Billy Dean, at the Starlite Theater.

The introduction of the new AFR/OFU Chaplain, Lyndell Birdsong also took place this year. As chaplain, Birdsong serves at various state events throughout the year and plays a pivotal role at the annual convention. He opened each general session and led a memorial service for AFR/OFU members who have passed away in the last calendar year. He also facilitated other smaller gatherings during the conven-

tion and will assist in planning activities for next year's event.

Thank you for celebrating another great year of rich heritage with AFR/OFU! We look forward to a very bright future with you!

Rich Heritage
Bright Future



AFR/OFU State Convention 2015



Lyndell Birdsong (left) made his debut as the new AFR/OFU chaplain, agent Dorothy Richey (center) sang to Women's Luncheon attendees and Branson comedian Jarrett Dougherty (right) entertained banquet guests. *Staff photos*



The PAC auction was a night of fun for the young (Youth Advisory Council Members Laura Wood and Hallie Barnes) and the young at heart (Mike Graham). *Staff photos*



Attendees fill the room at this year's AFR/OFU Women's Luncheon. *Staff photo*

Membership

AFR/OFU Board, Vice President Retain Seats

Information provided by

DANIELLE ROGERS

Cooperative Communications Specialist

AFR/OFU hosted the organization's 110th annual state convention at the Embassy Suites & Conference Center – Norman Feb. 13-14.

The membership voted on three contested seats on the AFR/OFU Board of Directors—Southwest District Seat #2, At-large Seat #1 and the vice presidency.



Joe Ed Kinder retained his board seat for another term. *Staff photo*

In the race for the Southwest District Seat #2, incumbent Joe Ed Kinder, Frederick, was challenged by Lee Horton, Mutual. Kinder won the race and will begin his third three-year term as an AFR/OFU director.

Kinder grew up on a farm near Chattanooga in Tillman County. He has been a member of OFU since the late 1950s and has had OFU or AFR insurance since that time. Kinder and his wife, JoAnn, were married in 1961 and have lived in the Chattanooga and Frederick area since. The Kinder farming and ranching operation consists of wheat, cotton and cow/calf pairs on more than 2,900 owned acres and 300 rented acres. The Kinders have two children, nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

"I want to thank all of the agents, officers and staff for all the hard work they have done," said Kinder. "I also want to thank the members for their support. I think it showed they feel the board of directors and officers are doing a good job of getting and keeping the company safe, sound and secure for the future."



Roy Perryman retained his board seat for another term. *Staff photo*

In the race for the At-Large Seat #1, incumbent Roy Perryman, Stigler, was challenged by Matt Burris, Stratford, and Ryan Plemmons, Broken Bow. Perryman won the race and will begin his second term since returning as an AFR/OFU director.

Perryman has a wealth of insurance experience that serves the organization well. He previously served on the AFR/OFU Board of Directors from 1992 to 2003. He was first appointed as an agent with OFU in December 1973 and started the Perryman Insurance Agency in 1974. He was named the AFRMIC Commercial Lines Top Producer in 2002. He sold the agency in May 2011, but retains his agent status with AFR.

"It's gratifying that the delegation supports the work the board has undertaken," said Perryman. "I look forward to working with the members and agents for the continued success of this company and its future."



John Porter retained the vice presidency for another term. *Staff photo*

In the race for the vice presidency, incumbent John Porter, Edmond, was challenged by Eric Bilderback, El Reno, and Monte Womack, Morris. Porter won the race and will begin his third term as AFR/OFU Vice President.

Porter, a third-generation AFR Insurance agent, was raised on a dairy and beef farm east of Stillwater. He graduated from Quay High School, then majored in business administration at UCO in Edmond and was a member of the Oklahoma National Guard from 1965 to 1971.

In 1973, Porter was hired by OFU to adjust insurance claims, first as a property loss adjuster and then as a multi-line adjuster. By the 1980s, he was a claims department supervisor.

During his 36-year career, Porter has worked directly with several organization presidents. He was elected AFR/OFU Vice President in 2010 and remains an active insurance agent through the agency he shares with his daughter in Edmond.

"I appreciate the membership for continuing to put their trust in me to represent them as the vice president of AFR/OFU," Porter said. "I want to thank everyone who voted for their continued support of this company and its future."

Beckham County Wins Achievement Award

Story by

DANIELLE ROGERS

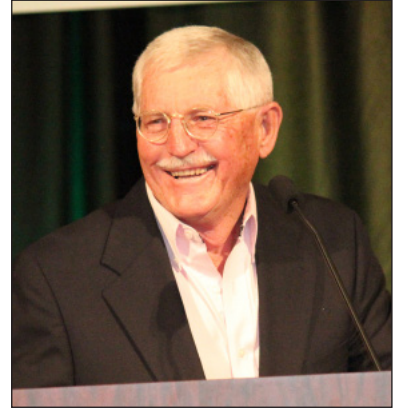
Cooperative Communication Specialist

Beckham County AFR/OFU was awarded the 2015 AFR/OFU County Achievement Award at the convention banquet Feb. 14.

The AFR/OFU County Achievement Award recognizes one outstanding county that has shown exemplary devotion to the AFR/OFU culture of giving back to communities across Oklahoma. Beckham County officers George Terry, Mangum, Noel Patton, Oklahoma City, and Cody Crow, Elk City, received the award.

"The county organizations are the life blood of AFR/OFU," said AFR/OFU President Terry Detrick. "Without outstanding counties, such as Beckham County, we would not be able to serve the great state of Oklahoma and further the cause of agriculture, families and rural America."

Each year, Beckham County AFR/OFU sponsors an annual legislative breakfast at the Southwest Farm and Home Expo. The county also has a booth at the expo for youth to promote the organization from the



Beckham County Board Member Noel Patton accepts the 2015 County Achievement Award. *Staff photo*

ground up.

This is the fifth year Beckham County has sponsored the annual area leadership meetings AFR/OFU provided in August 2014. The county provided the meal, promoted and sent out invitation to district agents and leadership in Beckham and surrounding counties to encourage them to become more active in the organizations.

Beckham County has also donated \$500 to every rural fire department in the county, \$500 to the Roger Mills – Beckham Burn Assoc. and to the North Fork Conservation District for outdoor classroom activities.

Miller Wins Prize at Convention



Ray Miller, Quinton, was the focus of one of convention's special moments—he had the winning ticket for the grand door prize. He is pictured here with his wife, Peggy.

This year's grand prize was a 2015 John Deere S240 lawn tractor, John Deere Lawn Sweeper, Stihl F536 RC-E Straight Shaft String Trimmer and Stihl BG55 Handheld Blower. The grand prize was sponsored by Farm Credit of East Central Oklahoma, Farm Credit of Western Oklahoma, Chisholm Trail Farm Credit and P&K Equipment. *Staff photo*

Membership

Oklahoma Represented at NFU Convention

Story by
PAUL JACKSON
AFR/OFU State Secretary

AFR/OFU members were represented with a full delegation to the National Farmers Union (NFU) 113th Convention in Wichita, Kan., March 14-17. As a chartered state of the NFU, based on its membership, AFR/OFU was eligible to have 24 delegates. The four-day event drew more than 480 family farmers, ranchers and fishermen from across the country and featured a number of high-profile speakers, workshops

and grassroots policymaking.

“Driving the Future of Agriculture” was the convention theme. Members not only heard from key policy makers, but were personally involved in shaping future policy for American agriculture that will make family farmers and ranchers more successful while they continue to be the best stewards of our nation’s resources.

Highlights of the convention included a keynote address from USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy and Dr. Temple Grandin.

During his address, Secretary Vilsack announced \$97 million in programs to support the continued development of farmers markets, farm to school efforts and rural economies and will also expand risk management tools for specialty crops and limited-resource farmers.

Administrator McCarthy promised the agency would soon come out with a final Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule—presumably by this spring. She told the crowd that the agency’s definition of tributaries in the initial draft was far too vague and that would be corrected. On the subject of ditches, McCarthy said that EPA needs to make the definitions clearer and that “most farm ditches were never covered before, and they won’t be in this new rule,” she promised.

But the heart and soul of this convention, like every convention, were the nuts and bolts of policy making, whereby NFU delegates from across the nation debated and voted on legislative policy. AFR/OFU member Brett Morris, Ninnekah farmer, rancher and agri-businessman served on the policy committee for Oklahoma. Morris was successful in getting language included with respect to the U.S. Dietary Guidelines “to utilize the abundant and thorough evidence suggesting that Americans should consume a balanced diet rich in nutrients which includes lean meats and dairy products. (A recent federal government recommendation encouraged reducing the amount of red meat proteins consumed.) Oklahoma delegates were



NFU convention attendees were (front row, left to right) Secretary Paul Jackson, Ringling; Delegate Oma Gay Nichols, Ringwood; (second row, left to right) Delegate Kent McAninch, Tonkawa; Vice President John Porter, Edmond; President Terry Detrick, Ames; Delegate Marilyn Sanders, Mustang; Delegate JoAnn Kinder, Frederick; Delegate Courtney Jackson, Ringling; Delegate Trish Hise, Cleo Springs; (third row, left to right) Delegate Charles White, Wagoner; Delegate Jan White, Wagoner; Delegate Peggy Miller, Quinton; Director Joe Ed Kinder, Frederick; Delegate Joe Hise, Cleo Springs; (fourth row, left to right) Delegate Linda Cowan, Locust Grove; Delegate Judy Perryman, Stigler; Director Roy Perryman, Stigler; (fifth row, left to right) Delegate Wayne Ludwig, Okache; Delegate Ray Miller, Quinton; Director Justin Cowan, Locust Grove; Delegate Kim Jackson, Ringling; Sarah Jackson, Ringling; and Director Jim Shelton, Vinita. Not pictured are CEO Richard Herren, Yukon; Policy Representative Brett Morris, Ninnekah; and Delegate Will Lane, Jay. Staff photo

also successful in providing moderation to positions throughout the policy document which would more closely align with state positions.

If you are interested in becoming a delegate to next year’s NFU convention, contact Paul Jackson concerning procedures and eligibility.



Top: USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack addresses NFU convention attendees. Staff photo

Bottom: President Terry Detrick (top) and Delegate Ray Miller (middle) address delegates about policy issues while Policy Committee Representative Brett Morris (bottom) presides. Staff photos



AFR/OFU representatives, including Director Joe Ed Kinder (bottom), President Terry Detrick (top, foreground) and Director Jim Shelton (top, background) help shape national policy. Staff photos

Membership

AFR/OFU Welcomes Northeast Field Rep

Contributed by
STEVE THOMPSON
Policy & Membership Coordinator



Jim Pilkington was recently appointed the AFR/OFU Northeast District Field Representative. He will be serving 36 agencies and 20 counties. Pilkington has been the president of the Okmulgee County Spring Livestock show for 15 years and has served as a committee member since 1975. He has served two years on the Northeast District State Alumni Council and is currently serving the State FFA Alumni Secretary.

Pilkington has announced the Oklahoma Youth Expo and AFR Swine Showmanship at the Oklahoma Youth Expo for five years and has recently added the OYE Dow Show.

He is also a chaperone for the State FFA Convention Chorus.

Pilkington graduated from Beggs High School in 1973 and received an Honorary Chapter Farmer Degree from Beggs FFA in 1978 and from Sapulpa FFA in 2010. In 2003, he received an Honorary State FFA Degree and, in 2011, an Honorary American Degree.

He is married to Carla, pharmacist and owner of the Pill Box Pharmacy in Sapulpa. They have three grown children and four grandchildren. The Pilkingtons are active members at the Canyon Road Baptist Church.

Pilkington continues to serve his community as president of the Lone Star School Board, the largest dependent school district in the state. When asked what his hobbies are, he said serving others.

"I don't fish, hunt or play golf," Pilkington said. "I just enjoy being involved in the FFA on the local and state level. I enjoy doing for others and helping where I can."

"I remember the last day of school in my senior year when my ag teacher, Larry Harvey, told us that wherever we made our homes to try to give back to the local FFA chapter because someone has done that for you. It is my hope that I have been able to lead by example and inspire our youth so that they will in turn give back to future generations."

New LEAD Program Hosts Agrifest Event

Information provided by
MEGAN ALBRIGHT
LEAD Coordinator

In cooperation with the 19th annual KNID Agrifest January 9-10, AFR/OFU co-sponsored two full days of educational seminars geared toward producers of all ages, backgrounds and interests. The presentations featured professionals discussing issues that are important in today's agricultural industry and will remain hot topics well into the future.

The event kicked off with Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives Jeff Hickman discussing current state issues such as the state budget, the effects of dropping oil prices on Oklahoma's economy and the improvements to roads across the state. Senators Eddie Fields and Patrick Anderson and Representatives John Enns and Chad Caldwell spoke about the importance of agriculture in our state, the growing problem of cattle theft, the state's focus on water issues and the decrease of agricultural leaders within the legislature. Dr. Rod Hall, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry State Veterinarian, finished up the morning seminars by presenting important legislative issues for 2015.

On Saturday, the morning seminars began with Andrea Metcalf, Senior Risk Management Specialist with Farmers Grain Co. educating attendees on five main sources of risk and five key principles of building a risk management plan. Metcalf was followed by Marty Meyer, Chisholm Trail Farm Credit, and Kyle Hohmann, Farm Credit of Enid, discussing financing options for young or growing farmers and ranchers.

Both afternoons included a presentation on the importance of cover crops to preserving soil moisture and adding nutrients by Steve Alspach, with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services, and Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts Area I Representative Jimmy Emmons.

Each afternoon also included a presentation by AFR/OFU President Terry Detrick and AFR Insurance Claims

Director Chad Yearwood on the risk of not having proper coverage on auto, farm and ranch insurance. Dr. Shannon Ferrell, OSU Department of Agricultural Economics, also presented each afternoon, detailing the importance of a succession plan for the family farm or business.

Closing both days of the Agrifest seminars, Oklahoma beef experts Michael Kelsey, Oklahoma Cattleman's Association; Trevor Mason, Northwest Stockyards and Northwest Feeders; and Dr. Tim Starks, Cherokee Sales Company and Animal Health Consultant presented marketing ideas, legislative issues and health concerns regarding cattle and the cattle business followed by a question and answer forum.

This year's educational seminars are part of AFR/OFU's new Leadership Exploration and Development (LEAD) program, an initiative directed at creating professional growth opportunities for Oklahomans. A priority of the program is to help future generations of agriculturalists stay up to date on trends and new technology within the industry.

Originally dubbed the Future Leaders Program, LEAD's name was changed to better reflect the program's goals and aspirations. For more information, contact LEAD Coordinator Megan Albright at (405)218-5416, malbright@afmic.com or iafr.com.

Robison Honored at Woodward Show



Mike Robison, AFR/OFU Northwest District Field Representative, was recognized as the Woodward District Livestock Show 2015 Show Honoree at the premium sale March 6. For the past twelve years, Robison has served as a show announcer and has assisted with the premium sale animal selection process. One honoree is selected each year. *Ag Youth Magazine photo*



Top: LEAD Coordinator Megan Albright presents lucky event attendee Colten Castle, Jet, Okla., with a Kindle Fire.

Bottom: Jimmy Emmons, a producer from Leedy, Okla., discusses the benefits and importance of cover crops to preserving soil moisture and adding nutrients. Emmons works closely with NRCS and their soil health program. *Staff photos*

Membership

Ag & Historic Conference Set for Ireland



Information provided by
MARILYN SANDERS
State Secretary Office

American Farmers & Ranchers is excited to announce the Fall 2015 Ag & Historic Conference in Ireland October 8-17! Immerse yourself in the stunning history, culture and landscape of the Emerald Isle!

DAY 1: DEPART FOR IRELAND

Board your overnight transatlantic flight bound for Ireland.

DAY 2: DUBLIN - TRINITY COLLEGE - GUINNESS

Get a panoramic view of Dublin with a local step-on guide. See Christ Church Cathedral and Oscar Wilde's Trinity College, famous for the 1,200 year-old Book of Kells and the magnificent Old Library. Enjoy lunch at a local pub and see the Guinness Storehouse, Ireland's most popular attraction. Check into your hotel for an evening at leisure.

DAY 3: GLENDALOUGH - BAILEYS IRISH CREAM - KILKENNY

Head south to scenic County Wicklow, with a brief photo stop at Glendalough, a remarkable place that will inspire your heart. At the Orchard Centre, meet Joe Hayden, a third generation dairy farmer and supplier of milk for Bailey's Irish Cream, and learn about Irish farming techniques. After lunch, enjoy a taste of Baileys. Arrive in Kilkenny for a free evening to walk around the 2014 Tidiest Town in Ireland.

DAY 4: WATERFORD CRYSTAL - MIDLETON - KINSALE

Journey to Waterford to see the world-famous House of Waterford Crystal. Continue to Middleton for a tasting at Old Jameson Distillery, then on through the rich farming countryside of South Cork to the picturesque town of Kinsale, known as the gourmet capital of Ireland. Check into your waterfront hotel and join fellow AFR members for a delicious dinner.

DAY 5: KINSALE - KENMARE - KILLARNEY

Via the fertile farmland of West Cork, journey to Glengarriff where ocean, river and ancient oak forest meet. Cross the Caha Mountains and

arrive in colorful Kenmare. Kenmare is a foodie town, so lunch will be at a restaurant on the main street. Arrive in Killarney for an evening at your leisure. The town is a fantastic place to explore in any season.

DAY 6: RING OF KERRY - KISSANE SHEEP FARM - KILLARNEY

Experience the Ring of Kerry, boasting magnificent views over Derrynane, home of Daniel O'Connell, known as "The Liberator." Enjoy lunch at a local pub and continue on to Moll's Gap to learn about sheep farming at the Kissane Family Farm where you'll see their sheep dogs in action. From Kissane Farm, see Ladies View, Killarney National Park and the Lakes of Killarney. Rest up with an evening at leisure.

DAY 7: MUCKROSS HOUSE - JAUNTING CARS - DINGLE - ADARE

Experience the Muckross House and Gardens by riding through Muckross Park on horse drawn carts, known as jaunting cars. Drive along the Dingle Peninsula, which National Geographic Traveler called "the most beautiful place on earth." Then see Gallarus Oratory's ancient beehive huts. Enjoy dinner in Adare, dubbed Ireland's prettiest village.

DAY 8: CLIFFS OF MOHER - FARM VISIT - DROMOLAND CASTLE

Depart for the Cliffs of Moher, which offer a magical vista that has captured the hearts of millions. The cliffs stretch five miles along the Atlantic coast and reach 702 feet at their highest point. Enjoy coffee and scones at a family farm that specializes in suckler cow farming before a short drive through the lunar landscape of the Bur-

ren. Experience the breathtaking five-star Dromoland Castle, built in the sixteenth century. The castle is the ancestral home of one of the few families of Gaelic royalty, direct descendants of the High King of Ireland. Spend the rest of the day to stroll the grounds, have a spa treatment or just simply relax.

DAY 9: FALCONRY SCHOOL - IRISH NAT'L STUD - IRISH CABARET

Discover the ancient sport of falconry at the Dromoland School of Falconry. On your "Hawk Walk," learn how to handle and fly one of the school's Harris Hawks. It's truly an unforgettable experience! See the Irish National Stud Farm, a historic working stud farm still producing

beautiful thoroughbreds. Then depart for Dublin for an entertaining night of traditional Irish music, food and dancing!

DAY 10: DEPART FOR HOME

Savor a last Irish breakfast before your flight home. Erin go bragh (Ireland forever)!

Due to the overwhelming response to the Ireland trip at convention, we are currently at capacity. However, if you are interested and would like to be placed on a wait list in the event someone cancels, we will be happy to take your information. Contact Marilyn Sanders at (405)218-5567 or Paul Jackson at (405)218-5559.



Membership

Costa Rica: An Adventure in Agriculture

Contributed by
MARILYN SANDERS
State Secretary Office

This past October, 2014 AFR/OFU Ag & Historic Conference attendees enjoyed a variety of agricultural operations and other points of interest in Costa Rica.

There were many tropical scenic and agricultural stops during the event. Attendees visited a working coffee estate to experience the dif-

ferent stages and flavors of coffee; a butterfly sanctuary; a lesson in the history and making of artisan chocolate; and the Poas Volcano National Park, Costa Rica's most visited natural park and wildlife refuge with waterfalls, monkeys and other wildlife.

Other agricultural stops included a privately owned Golden Fruit Pineapple farm, where attendees learned how pineapples are planted, grown, harvested and transported to the United States. Members also enjoyed

learning how a sugar cane mill works. They even got to taste the sweet liquid squeezed from the sugar cane.

Attendees also took a boat ride at the Palo Verde National Park, ending with a beautiful relaxing beach.

The international Ag & Historic Conference is a membership-only benefit offered to AFR/OFU members. The next annual conference is set for Ireland Oct. 8-17. Unfortunately,

space for this membership adventure is at capacity at this time.

If you would like to be placed on a wait list or for more information, contact Marilyn Sanders at (405)218-5567 or msanders@afmic.com.

Memories from Costa Rica include Bob and Anne Marchant and Stanley and Linda Wright posing with a waterfall (top left); Roy Bryant waiting on a hummingbird (top right); a magnificent waterfall and unforgettable pineapple farm (bottom left); Terry and Dawn Gay Brooks enjoying the scenery (below); and a group dinner full of fellowship (bottom right). *Staff photo*



Is this your reward sign?



Is this your gate posted with the new AFR/OFU reward sign? If so, call (405) 218-5559 to claim a \$50 reward. Watch the next edition of the News & Views to see if your new sign has been spotted. These signs are available from your local agent. Complete reward program rules can be found on our website at www.iafr.com. *Staff photo*



MEMBER BENEFITS

GENERAL BENEFITS

- Access to quality farm, home, auto and life insurance
- Media response, info, promotion and public relations services
- Legislative representation at national, state and local levels
- Policy development and education
- \$5,000 reward for arson, theft or vandalism to AFR property insureds

DISCOUNT BENEFITS

- Discount medical flight membership program
- Discounts on rental cars and hotels
- Discounts on dental and vision plan
- Discounts on Constant Contact e-mail marketing
- Discounts on office and school supplies and legal services

MEDIA BENEFITS

- Subscription to the quarterly AFR/OFU News & Views
- Subscription to the News & Views Insider e-newsletter
- Subscription to the National Farmers Union e-newsletter
- Free classified advertising in quarterly publication

YOUTH BENEFITS

- Speech and poster contests
- State and county educational scholarships
- Youth leadership summit
- Agricultural contests
- Youth sponsorships

Revised January 1, 2015

Membership

From Scratch to Market: Commercializing a Food Product

Contributed by
LACI JONES
FAPC Communications

Your friends tell you your salsa is the best they ever tasted. Your mother has been serving her “world’s best” homemade jelly for years. Your grandmother’s pasta sauce is the hit of every family gathering. You think about selling your food product, but you don’t know where to begin.

OSU’s Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center, a part of the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, has food scientists that specialize in helping entrepreneurs commercialize home-made recipes.

Scaling Up Food Recipes

Erin Johnson, FAPC business and marketing client coordinator, said clients often contact the center with a recipe created in their home.

“The clients’ goal is to produce their product on a mass scale, but some clients do not know the steps to produce a product for market,” she said.

The recipe scale-up process is a component of FAPC’s Client Success Path, which is a five-step program for entrepreneurs to take a product to market.

“Depending on the product, scale up can be completed in about six hours in one visit to the center,” Johnson said. “FAPC completes approximately 10 recipe scale-ups per year for a variety of different food products, the most popular being jams, jellies, sauces, salsas and condiments.”

Darren Scott, FAPC food scien-

tist and sensory specialist, said there are three steps in scaling up product recipes, but it must start with a satisfactory product.

“Once a satisfactory product is obtained, we help scale-up the recipe for mass production, packaging, distribution and sales,” Scott said.

Step 1

The first step is converting units used at home to units typically used in the industry. It is easier to work with industry units when measuring large amounts of ingredients.

FAPC takes the dashes, pinches, cups and other standardized units used by the client and converts them to pounds, grams or gallons. The ingredients also are converted to percentages for the distribution process.

Once FAPC gives the clients the percentages of ingredients within their product, the client will typically take the percentages to a contract packager, or co-packer, to scale up their recipe for distribution. FAPC recommends clients conduct research before picking a co-packer.

“Co-packers can be selected by reviewing their cost of services, production records and experiences with similar products,” Scott said. “FAPC provides the client a list of questions that can be used to interview co-packers.”

Scaling up a recipe is also about the business side of production.

“Many producers come to FAPC for assistance and do not realize their production costs,” Johnson said.



Darren Scott, FAPC food scientist and sensory specialist, uses a bowl chopper in the making of homemade salsa. FAPC photo

“Initially, they will often purchase home-style ingredients for their product at retail cost, then switch their ingredients for a cheaper alternative to lower production costs.”

In some cases, there are ingredients available with specific functionality that may be used to replace their home-style ingredients in scaled-up batches. An example of a cheaper alternative is replacing a thickening agent purchased at the store for a commercial batch starch.

Step 2

The next step in the scale-up process is observing the batch and noting any changes that occur in comparison to the original recipe. When scaling-up a recipe, the ingredients sometimes react differently when produced on a larger scale.

“Scaled-up batches of a product may be very different from the original formula because of differences in taste, texture, aroma or appearance,” Scott said. Foods are a complex system of interacting physical and chemical properties. When the product is scaled up, the function of these properties changes.”

The scaled-up products often receive a higher degree of scrutiny compared to home-style products, Scott said. The scaled-up batch makes observing “flaws” easier, which may have already existed in the small batch.

“It should be noted that many times the scaled-up batches are of-

ten no better or worse than the original,” Scott said. “They are just different.”

Some ingredients are more difficult to scale up than others. For example, Scott said it is important to consider whether the fruit and vegetable commodities need to be peeled, cored or seeded when scaling-up.

“The client will sometimes change the ingredients so the product will work well on a larger scale,” Johnson said. “It is a trial and error experience. In some cases, it might not be possible to make the scaled-up batch identical to the original small batch.”

Step 3

The final step is making adjustments to the scaled-up recipe.

“The ultimate goal is making the subsequent batches of the recipe closely match the original recipe,” Scott said. “This may involve changes in the ingredients, in the equipment used to make the recipe or both.”

The Final Formulation

In addition to product scale-up, FAPC offers a variety of resources and workshops to assist food entrepreneurs in creating a product.

FAPC’s Basic Training helps entrepreneurs address issues through business planning assistance and strategies, market identification and food-processing regulations.

“The food product scale-up is an exciting and challenging process that requires an organized, flexible and consistent approach for success,” Scott said. “Success is often achieved when a recipe and process for commercial production is accomplished and is ultimately measured in terms of the food product’s profitability and customer satisfaction.”

PAINT YOUR PATH

AFR Women’s Conference

August 5, 2015 1-8 p.m. Oklahoma City

Tentative Women’s Conference Schedule:

1-1:30 p.m. Registration

1:30-2:30 p.m. Keynote Speaker

3-4 p.m. Breakout Session 1

“Marketing Yourself and Your Organization” or “Getting Involved in Your Community”

4-5 p.m. Breakout Session 2

“Social Media 101” or “CPR Certification Training”

6-8 p.m. Dinner and Painting

(Every attendee will paint their own painting led by a professional teacher.)

The AFR Women’s Conference will be followed by the:

Oklahoma Women in Ag Conference

August 6-7,

Moore-Norman Technology Center

We are only planning for 50 ladies. The first 50 to register will be able to attend.

If you would like to also attend the Oklahoma Women in Ag Conference, we will cover the \$35 registration fee for the 50 ladies attending the AFR/OFU Women’s Conference.

For more info, contact Megan Albright at (405)218-5416, malbright@afmic.com or iafr.com.



Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center
Oklahoma State University
148 FAPC, Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078
(405) 744-6071 | www.fapc.biz | fapc@okstate.edu

Membership

BAKED HONEY MUSTARD CHICKEN

Ingredients

- 3 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 3 Tbsp. whole grain mustard
- 3 Tbsp. honey, or more, to taste
- 2 Tbsp. chicken stock, or more, to taste
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 3 sprigs rosemary

For the mustard rub:

- 1 Tbsp. olive
- 1 Tbsp. whole grain mustard
- Kosher salt & ground pepper, to taste
- 8 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. To make mustard rub, combine olive oil and whole grain mustard in a small bowl; season with salt and pepper. Using your fingers or a brush, work the mustard rub onto both sides of the chicken.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together Dijon mustard, whole grain mus-

tard, honey and chicken stock. Add more stock as needed until desired consistency is reached; set aside.

4. Heat olive oil in a large oven-proof skillet over medium high heat. Add chicken, skin-side down. Sear both sides until golden brown, about 2-3 minutes per side. Add mustard mixture and sprinkle with rosemary.

5. Place into oven and roast until completely cooked through, reaching an internal temperature of 175 degrees F, about 25-30 minutes.
6. Serve immediately.



AMERICAN FARMERS & RANCHERS SAYS "THANK YOU" FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO HOST THE 2015 KNID AGRIFEST FARM & RANCH FORUM.

AFR APPRECIATES THESE SEMINAR SPEAKERS:

- "Issues Affecting Oklahoma in 2015"**
Jeff Hickman, Speaker of the Oklahoma House
Dr. Rod Hall, ODAFF
Eddie Fields, State Senator
Patrick Anderson, State Senator
John Enns, State Representative
Chad Caldwell, State Representative
- "There's Hope in Healthy Soil"**
Steve Atsopch, USDA NRCS
Jimmy Emmons, Oklahoma Assoc. of Conservation Districts
- "Asset Protection- Your Risk of Losing It All"**
Terry Debnick, American Farmers & Ranchers
Chad Yearwood, AFR Mutual Insurance Company
- "Keeping the Family Farming - Succession Planning"**
Dr. Shannon Ferrell, OSU Dept. of Agricultural Economics
- "Oklahoma Beef: Health, Marketing and Current Issues"**
Michael Kelsey, Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association
Trevor Mason, Northwest Stockyards and Northwest Feeders
Dr. Tim Starks, Livestock Marketing Assoc., Cherokee Sales Co.
- "Managing Risk: The Big Picture"**
Andrea Melcoff, Farmers Grain Company
- "Lending 101 for Beginning Farmers, Young Farmers and Family Advisors"**
Marly Meyer, Chisholm Trail Farm Credit
Kyle Hohmann, Farm Credit of Enid

Additional thanks to:
Eat It Up Bakery
Chisholm Trail Expo Center



2015 Leadership Summit

REGISTRATION FORM

SELECT SESSION:

_____ Teen Session ~ July 26-28, 2015 (Entering grades 7, 8, 9) _____ Senior Session ~ July 29 - Aug. 1, 2015 (Entering grades 10, 11, 12)

SELECT SHIRT SIZE: (Adult sizes - please circle) S M L XL 2XL

STUDENT'S LAST NAME: _____ AGE: _____

STUDENT'S FIRST NAME: _____ SEX: _____

SCHOOL: _____ GRADE ENTERING: _____

COUNTY: _____ 4-H/FFA CHAPTER: _____

STUDENT'S ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PARENTS: _____

PARENTS' PHONE #: _____ STUDENT'S PHONE #: _____

PARENTS' EMAIL: _____ STUDENT'S EMAIL: _____

ARE YOU OR YOUR PARENT CURRENTLY AN AFR/OFU MEMBER? Y N

NAME ON MEMBERSHIP: _____

ARE YOU OR YOUR PARENT A CURRENT AFR POLICYHOLDER? Y N

NAME ON POLICY: _____

TYPE OF POLICY: FARM AUTO HOME LIFE

A completed registration form and full payment is required to reserve your Summit spot. When these items are received by the AFR/OFU Youth Program, medical and personal release forms will be mailed to you. Mail registration form to:
Blaire Boyer, AFR/OFU Youth Coordinator, P. O. Box 24000, Okla. City, OK 73124

Enclose a check payable to: American Farmers & Ranchers, Teen Session \$85; Senior Session \$100
(Non-Members include two checks - One for the camp session fee and an additional membership check of \$35.
(Only one membership check needed per household.)

AFR/OFU State Scholarships Offered

AFR/OFU's state scholarships are available to qualified students in all 77 Oklahoma counties. Students are eligible to apply for the Incoming Freshman Scholarship during their senior year of high school. Students may then apply for the Continuing Education Scholarship throughout their undergraduate career. Both previous and first time applicants are eligible for the Continuing Education Scholarship.

Recipients are selected based on knowledge of and involvement in AFR/OFU, leadership activities, scholastic achievement and financial need. Eligible applicants must have attended two years of AFR/OFU Senior Leadership Summit, have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 and be an AFR Insurance policyholder.

For more information on scholarship opportunities or other AFR/OFU Youth Program projects, contact Youth & Education Coordinator Blaire Boyer at (405)218-5561 or bboyer@afmic.com.

Applications due by
APRIL 15, 2015

Applications available online at:
<http://www.iafr.com/youth-education>

Incomplete applications
will not be accepted.

Submit applications to:
Blaire Boyer
AFR/OFU Youth & Education Coordinator
P.O. Box 24000
Oklahoma City, OK 73124

Youth Program

Premium Sale Rewards Hard Work, Dedication

Story by

DANIELLE ROGERS

Cooperative Communications Specialist

Hard work and perseverance pay off for many youth participants during livestock show season, with the biggest rewards coming at large shows like the Tulsa State Fair and Oklahoma Youth Expo (OYE). These statewide premium sales are what participants strive to reach. Eighth grader Rylee Simpson, 14, a member of the Locust Grove FFA Chapter and AFR/OFU, is one of those lucky enough to make the auction and see her dedication to early mornings and late nights rewarded.

There are many ways showing livestock can teach life lessons and strong work ethic. The work involved in preparing animals for show season, and ultimately the premium auctions, begins months in advance.

Rylee, who has shown barrows in both the Tulsa State Fair and OYE premium sales, begins each season by allowing her new hogs to acclimate to her and their new surroundings for a couple of weeks before she begins working with them. When the work begins, months of morning and evening feedings, daily brushings, washings and training lay ahead.

Like many stock show participants, Rylee began young—her dad got her started at three years old. When an appreciation for livestock shows begins that early in life, money is rarely the most important reason to participate. Riley's favorite thing about showing is the showmanship.

"Showmanship proves what you've done and the effort you've put into it. It's taught me a lot about hard work," Simpson said.

Regardless of her motivation, donations help. AFR/OFU invests more than \$25,000 annually at both the Tulsa State Fair and OYE premium auctions. Every dollar invested goes directly to livestock exhibitors, like

Rylee Simpson, who make the premium sales and are AFR/OFU members or policyholders.

According to Rylee, sponsorships like AFR/OFU's help young showmen and show-women buy next year's crop of show stock or make much needed renovations to the barns and facilities where they keep their animals. For older participants, donations may help pay college tuition or start young farmers and ranchers on the road to success.

For other youth interested in livestock showing, Rylee advises, "Give it a try. You can meet people from all over. It's really good!"

Rylee has proven livestock shows are a great way for youth to network and make friends—she has met many of her friends in the show ring.

Shows are a jumping off point for other positive activities. Rylee is currently involved in livestock judging and will begin giving speeches next year. She also aspires to be a veterinarian.

"I don't think I'd want

to be a vet unless I started showing."

For information about AFR/OFU-sponsored events or to get involved in youth activities, contact Youth Coordinator Blaire Boyer at (405) 218-5561 or bboyer@afmic.com.



Rylee Simpson (second right), AFR CEO Richard Herren (far left), Director Justin Cowan (second left) and Director Roy Perryman (far right) pose with Rylee's barrow at the 2015 OYE premium sale. This year marks the hundredth anniversary of the livestock show. Staff photo



AFR agent Crystie Shebester's son, Cooper, poses with his steer in front of (left to right) his little brother, Konner, Alex ag teacher Chris Hall, CEO Richard Herren, Dir. Roy Perryman, Dir. Mike Humble, Dir. Justin Cowan and State Secretary Paul Jackson. Staff photo



Top: Director Jim Shelton enjoys interacting with both youth and sponsors at this year's OYE premium sale.

Bottom: Darci Peach addresses the premium auction crowd after her bronze medallion goat sells. Staff photos

Youth Program

OYE Contest Encourages Knowledge, Showmanship

Information provided by
BLAIRE BOYER
Youth & Education Coordinator

AFR/OFU teamed up with the Oklahoma Youth Expo again this year to host the Agricultural Achievement Contest that recognizes youth who excel in showmanship and demonstrate superior knowledge of the livestock industry including production, management, processing, and end product utilization.

Ninety-five high school students entered the contest held at State Fair Park March 16-19, with awards presented March 19. The contest is open to high school juniors and seniors who exhibit animals at OYE.

All contestants completed a written exam, with questions pertaining to all phases of the livestock industry, including current events. Example questions include "What is the study of how animals behave in their natural habitat?" and "What is the time an animal must be taken off feed prior to slaughter?"

Each participant was also evaluated on showmanship ability in one show class. Combined test and showmanship scores determined the top eleven contestants, who then participated in a personal interview.

Interview questions pertained to applicants' livestock project and the



Competitors display their showmanship skills during the Ag Achievement Contest's showmanship classes. *Staff photos*

industry. Example questions include "What do you think is the most important thing you learned from this project?," "Where do you see the industry going?," and "What is one of the major issues with the packing industry right now?"

Each year, AFR/OFU presents \$5,000 in prizes to contest winners. The top eleven finalists in the 2015 contest were: Sheldon Price, Laverne FFA, eleventh place; Brittny Richards, Oktaha FFA, tenth place; Regina Leuty, McAlester FFA, ninth place; Brynn Danker, Wellston FFA, eighth

place; Vivienne Hasenbeck, Elgin FFA, seventh place; Jason Murray, Kingfisher FFA, sixth place; Jill Mencke, Hennessey FFA, fifth place; Brayden Foley, Kingfisher FFA, fourth place; Wyatt Catron, Stilwell FFA, third place; Jaryn Frey, Kingfisher FFA, second place; and Hallie Barnes, Porter FFA Chapter, first place.



AFR/OFU Youth Coordinator Blaire Boyer and President Terry Detrick pose with this year's top eleven contestants. The contest typically results in ten finalists, but this year included a tie. *Staff photo*

AFR/OFU Sponsors Judging

AFR/OFU sponsored the awards and other necessities at the Northwest District Livestock Judging Contest held in Enid February 4.

The top individuals and group team members received medals. The top three teams in each category also received a plaque for their school. Members of first place teams were presented with duffle bags at the premium sale.



AFR/OFU field rep Mike Robison poses with the Senior FFA High Team, Kingfisher FFA. *J. Kisling photo*



AFR/OFU field rep Mike Robison poses with the Senior 4-H High Team, Kay County 4-H. *J. Kisling photo*



AFR/OFU field rep Mike Robison poses with the Junior FFA High Team, Kingfisher FFA. *J. Kisling photo*



AFR/OFU field rep Mike Robison poses with the Junior 4-H High Team, Kingfisher County 4-H. *J. Kisling photo*

Insurance

Continued from LOONEY, 9

“I always gave everybody who entered the county speech contest a little cheap trophy,” she said. “It’s unbelievable how many trophies I gave away!”

“I think it was in my heart to help the youth. Everyone knows they’re the hope of the world.”

Celeste Looney
Long-time AFR Agent

One year, Looney contributed more dollars than she’d planned to a couple of promising students headed to state.

“I told them, if you boys win that contest, I’ll give you \$100. Back then, that was a lot of money! Would you believe, they went to Oklahoma City and two of them won first. One of them had the flu and a 104 degree fever and he won second!”

“I did it because it was there to do,” she said. “If someone doesn’t do it, it won’t get done.”

Celeste Looney
Long-time AFR Agent

Looney’s primary interest has always been with youth. When asked why it’s so important to help young people, she said simply, “I think it was in my heart to help the youth. Everyone knows they’re the hope of the world.”

While she loves the youth of Cherokee county, Looney never forgot others worth celebrating.

“I noticed nobody gave the women trophies. We gave them to the boys. We gave them to the girls. The men went out and got their sports award. The women just stayed home and did the hard work, but didn’t get an award. So I started giving a homemaker award.”

Looney estimates she started giving the homemaker awards between 1990 and 1995. The county is now up to five each year.

When asked why she has given so much over the years, Looney shrugs it off. “I did it because it was there to do,” she said. “If someone doesn’t do it, it won’t get done.”

Through the years, Celeste has remained a pillar of Cherokee County—she was county assessor for 24 years—of AFR/OFU—she was integral to the

development of the AFR Agents Association and of the Tahlequah community, but she’s also passing the torch to future generations. In 1999, she retired and her son and daughter-in-law, Roy and Martha Bryant, took over the agency. In 2009, Celeste’s granddaughter and her husband, Garrett and Brandi Barnett, joined the company.

Fortunately, the family has taken on more than just the business. The culture of giving has spread through the entire family and remains with the agency today. Everyone in the family participates in service endeavors.

Younger family members are also adding their own ideas to the Celeste Looney legacy.

“She always followed her passions. Education and youth was always important to her and she passed that along,” said her granddaughter, Brandi. “With every generation, we find what we like. We keep her passions going, but add what we love as well.

“Garrett was in IT so we now sponsor robotics, and I was a teacher so we help the teachers’ association. My parents and grandma have always donated to the Hope Center, a shelter for abused women. This year, I supplied “birthday in a box” supplies, which give all the decorations

needed for a party. “That’s still supporting family, which is what Grandma started.”

“You can help someone who needs you. It may just be a smile; it may just be a kind word.”

Celeste Looney
Long-time AFR Agent

When asked what advice she would give new agents coming into the industry, Celeste gave a very characteristic answer.

“What advice would I give them? Dig deep and see who you can help. If you help them, you’ll have a hand at your back. Just be kind. Understand their troubles and trials. Everybody’s got them. You can help someone who needs you. It may just be a smile; it may just be a kind word.”



Celeste Looney presents an award in 1982. C. Looney photo



Marked 1984, this photo shows Celeste Looney smiling with a young boy after a livestock show, believed to still be a member/policyholder. C. Looney photo



Celeste Looney poses with a young livestock showman and his winning show hog at the 2001 Cherokee County Junior Livestock Show. C. Looney photo

Classifieds

News & Views

Trading Post

HOME OFFICE DUE DATE FOR PUBLICATION IN THE SUMMER ISSUE: JUNE 1

AFR/OFU NEWS & VIEWS TRADING POST ADS
P.O. BOX 24000, OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA., 73124
PHONE: 405-218-5590 FAX: 405-218-5589
TRADINGPOSTADS@AFRMIC.COM

Classified advertising in the Trading Post is available free of charge to all paid-up members of AFR/OFU. Ads must be of a personal nature and strictly non-commercial. Commercial ads and ads for non-members can be purchased at the rate of \$1 per word, paid in advance. Member ads must be 30 words or less, unless the member pays in advance for additional words. Each member is limited to one advertisement per issue. Advertising will not be accepted for services or products in direct competition with those offered by AFR/OFU or affiliates. AFR/OFU reserves the right to not print any ad deemed inappropriate.

REAL ESTATE

For Sale—Hot Springs Village, Ark., Lot 23, Block 2, Combre subdivision. Call 405/823-6508 for additional information.

For Sale—Two adjoining lots (354 and 355) in Canadian Shores #3, Pittsburg Co. \$2500 OBO for both. Call 347/882-3885 anytime or email BoDavis37@aol.com. If no answer, please leave message.

AUTOS, TRUCKS & CYCLES

For Sale—2006 GMC 2500 pick-up, long bed, gray. Good truck, good glass and seats. 230,000 miles. \$7,800. 918/623-1663.

For Sale—1964 F100 straight 6 cyl., 3 speed on column. Newly upholstered seat, new brakes, master cylinder, tires & several other new parts. Rubber mat & sprayed bed liner on inside walls of bed. Second owner, runs great. \$7,500. 918/448-3479.

BOATS, RVs, CAMPERS & TRAILERS

For Sale—2007 Gulf Stream, 30 ft. bumper-pull toy hauler. 3.6 kw Generac generator, central H/A, TV, microwave, cook stove/oven, good tires with spare. All in excellent working order. \$13,375. 405/624-2448.

For Sale—Four-horse older white steel slant gooseneck. Nearly new tires, thick mats. \$2,500. 405/412-5031.

For Sale—Utility trailer. 16 ft. dual axle with

ramps. \$800. 918/324-5758.

FARM & RANCH EQUIPMENT

For Sale—6430 Premium John Deere Tractor with 673 self-leveling loader. 4WD, 115 HP, 16-speed automatic. Includes bucket, forks and pallet jack forks. \$69,500. 580/364-6592, Atoka.

For Sale—Two trucks, International, 1967 and 1970, 16-ft. steel grain beds with hoist. International 516 semi-mount plows and 10-ft. chisel. 40-ft. transport grain auger. Other miscellaneous farm machinery. 918/738-4117, Rallston.

ANTIQUE FARM EQUIPMENT

For Sale—Antique Farmall 806 D. Rated over 100 HP, serial #40458. Has cab, runs good. \$4,850. Call 918/463-3178 after 7 p.m.

LIVESTOCK

For Sale—Reg. Polled Hereford bulls, heifers and a few cow/calf pairs. Remitall Online 122L and PW Victor Boomer P606 genetics. 48 years of breeding polled Herefords. Kenneth E. Bolin, 580/332-2468.

For Sale—Reg. Beefmasters. Bulls, cows, heifers (bred and opens), show heifers. Red, black and dunn. Polled and horned. Www.doubleducebeefmasters.com, 918/253-8680 or 918/557-6923.

For Sale—Reg. Limousin bulls and heifers, open and bred. Black, polled, calving ease, gentle, some homozygous top genetics that

work. Limflex angus bull. Wildhorse Valley. 405/517-3824 or 405/474-2018.

For Sale—Brangus bulls and fancy replacement heifers. Top quality genetics, gentle dispositions. Delivery available. Horsehead Ranch. 918/695-2357.

For Sale—Reg. polled Dexter cattle. Docile nature and smaller stature. Make great show animals. Also, reg. spotted, colored, traditional Boer goats. View them on our website @qualityboergoats.com. 918/642-5063.

HAY, FEED & SEED

For Sale—Sea minerals, "Let's Do It Nature's Way." Pasture - Crops - Free Choice to Cattle. \$4/acre, \$12/year, \$50/50# bag, \$1600/ton. Free shipping for ton lots. www.OSM100.com. 918/698-5308 or 918/367-5146.

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

For Sale—GE W/D, \$200. Refrigerator, \$100. Black glass-top electric Maytag cook stove, \$300. Electric cook stove, \$100. Yellow Jacket ref. gauges \$150. Oxygen bottle \$75. 405/275-3419.

For Sale—Three 10-ton house jacks, cast metal, 22 inches high, \$200. Jack LaLane Juicer, brand new, brand new in box with all paperwork, \$75. Orthofix spinal stimulator, new, cost \$1500, asking \$100. Call 405/695-2751.

MISCELLANEOUS

Free help understanding Medicare and Medicare supplements for AFR/OFU mem-

bers 65 and older. Including Parts A, B, C and D, Open Enrollment, Guarantee Issue, sign-up times, etc. Call Melodie Schaffer @ 580/276-3672.

For Sale—110-year-old used bricks, cleaned. 30 cents each. You haul. Wister. 918/655-3126.

Bee swarms removed. Oklahoma State Beekeepers Assoc. member. 405/380-2438.

For Sale—Over 400 issues of the Workbasket Magazine dating from 1951 to 1995. Also lots of quilt magazines. Call 580/788-2942 or 405/2041488.

For Sale—Registered chocolate Lab puppies for sale. Male and female available. Hunting background. Contact: 580/227-7261 or 580/227-0775.

For Sale—Cedar lumber, 8 ft. long. Dry for 5 years. 1x6, 1x5 and 1x4. Cedar posts also available. 580/271-0306.

WANTED

Wanted—Interesting and classic vehicles. Lee @ 405/613-1857.

Wanted—Oklahoma Farmers Union memorabilia (pictures, agency signs, elevator items, old charters, etc.). 405/218-5559.

Wanted—Old cars, hard tops and convertibles. Running or not. 918/482-3272.

Wanted—Deck or fence jobs in or near Shawnee. Jennifer @ 918/866-2468 or 405/802-4126.

DUE DATE FOR PUBLICATION
IN THE SUMMER ISSUE:

June 1

In Memoriam

Richard A. "Dick" Stults



Richard A. "Dick" Stults passed away Feb. 25, 2015. Services were held March 2, 2015, at Baggerley Funeral Home Chapel with interment

at Luther Cemetery in Luther, Okla.

Stults was born Feb. 4, 1926, in Bray, Okla., to Jesse and Beulah Stults.

Seventeen-year-old Stults joined the Navy in 1943, while still a senior at Bray High School. He was a member of the Amphibious Force on an L.S.T. After serving, he received his bachelor's from Central State University and his master's from OU.

Stults was involved in coaching and school administration for more than 30 years, serving as Luther Elementary principal for the majority

of his career.

Stults and his wife, Sarah, worshipped joyfully alongside friends at the Wellston Church of Christ for many years and, in recent years, at the Luther Church of Christ. He served on the Central Rural Electric Coop Board of Directors for more than 20 years and the AFR/OFU Board of Directors from 1995 to 2011.

Stults loved his Lord and family above all. He enjoyed farming the land, raising cattle and traveling with the love of his life, Sarah. His greatest joy was family; he was especially proud of his grandson, Ryan.

Stults was preceded in death by his parents; sister, Mary Lois Graham Jones; and brother, Wesley Stults. He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Sarah of the home; daughter, Susan Stults of OKC; son, Lindell Stults and wife Shawna of Luther; grandson, Ryan Stults of Stillwater; brother, Alvie Stults of Oregon; and many family members and friends.

Paul Leon Richey



Paul Leon Richey, 83, of Blanchard, passed away Feb. 21, 2015. Services were held Feb. 24, 2015, at First Baptist Church in Blanchard.

Burial with military honors followed at Blanchard Cemetery.

Richey was born in Blanchard, on Oct. 4, 1931, to Doyle B. and Lois Marie (Gilpatrick) Richey. Richey was a decorated Korean War Veteran and served in the 45th Infantry Division.

Richey married Jo Ann Daniels on May 29, 1957. After living in California for a few months, they returned to Blanchard where he opened a gas station with his father-in-law.

Paul later worked his way up to fleet manager for a trucking company, before joining his wife in the

Richey Insurance and Tag Agency. Jo Ann Richey continues the insurance agency today.

Richey was dedicated to serving the Blanchard community. He was a volunteer fireman for 20 years and served as a councilman and mayor.

Paul enjoyed hunting, fishing, camping and working outdoors. He always had a smile, a wink and a story for family and friends.

Richey was preceded in death by his parents, two sisters, Braunita Sittingdown and Glenda Lynch, and two brothers, Rhul Gene Richey and Braunell Richey. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Jo Ann Richey; two children with his first wife: a son, Rickey Paul Richey and wife Sharon of Ft. Worth, and a daughter, Sharon Annesley and husband Danny of Blanchard; two grandchildren, Clinton Paul Roberts of Blanchard and Marla Jo Dotzel and husband Justin of Charlotte, N.C.; and numerous other relatives and friends.

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Forever Indebted!

RICH HERITAGE...
...BRIGHT FUTURE!



TERRY
DETRICK

This was the theme of the 110th annual convention of American Farmers & Ranchers/Oklahoma Farmers Union (AFR/OFU).

Think back with me to a time two years before statehood. Think about what the Oklahoma Territory and the Indian Territory were then and what, as Oklahoma, they have become. That is also AFR/OFU!

Since the inception of the great State of Oklahoma AND Oklahoma Farmers Union two years earlier, we have held hands and made each other what we are today. One of the charter member organizers of OFU who participated in the writing of our OFU charter was Alfalfa Bill Murray. Surprisingly, he was considered a “moderate” populist for his time and went on to preside over the first constitutional convention, participated in the writing of the state constitution when Oklahoma became a state and served as its 9th governor.

HISTORY—Together previous generations endured an untamed frontier, a land rush of mixed cultures, the building of fences across the prairies causing squabbles between cattle ranchers and crop farmers, water wars, prairie fires, dust

bowl days, a great depression, and disease epidemics that robbed families of their children. Yet, together we have found a way.

THE WAY—What was it? It was a strong faith in God, a selfless willingness to overcome differences by cooperating together to build something stable and long-lasting that could be perpetuated for future generations—US!

It has been said: “The true measure of resolve is how we deal with challenges when passing through the fire.” Also, “hardships and difficulties breed character.”

CHARACTER—That, my dear friends, is exactly who we are—people of character—the kind of members I am so very proud to represent! Have we had differences? You bet we have! Have we endured times of severe hardships? You bet we have! But, people of character recognize that “success is a journey, not a destination!”

With a heritage such as ours, is our future bright? I’ve never been more sure of it. Once more, with the sacrifice and cooperation from every member, insurance agent, employee, dedicated board member and administration, we have once more climbed from the depths of despair to being as strong financially as any time in our history. By never underestimating the power of prayer and by cooperating together unselfishly with pure goals, we WILL ensure AFR/OFU’s continuing endurance and bright future.

We must remember we can only make forward progress by learning from the past and focusing intently on future goals. We can say we have “inherited” a rich heritage from past generations, and indeed we have, but, in all honesty, we’ve really only “borrowed” it from future generations. We are “forever indebted,” both to the past AND to the future! We MUST focus on building the next

generation and WE are the generation that must “adapt and accept” the “technology generation!”

There’s no time for finger pointing. True success will only come by not worrying about who gets the credit and by going forward together through a grassroots spirit of cooperation—forward, with the heart of a servant!

In closing, I must ask forgiveness for a big oversight on my part during our convention. Along with recognizing our valuable staff who made it all come together, I failed to recognize our field representatives who not only are involved in their districts around the state year round, but also do a lot of heavy lifting behind the scenes at our convention with little or no acknowledgement. To A.J and Aliene Bristow (Southeast), Pete McDaniel (Southwest), Jim Pilkington (Northeast), and Mike Robison (Northwest), I want to say a great big “thank you” for your faithful efforts to serve our membership.

May God bless each one of you as we face the challenges of the future together and recognize we are “forever indebted!”

-Terry

Oklahoma Farmers Union (OFU) was formed in 1905 when a group of farmers banded together to break monopolies inhibiting the transportation and marketing of their crops. Their cooperative venture brought supplies, fresh opportunities and progress to their small community. Our founders knew their combined effort would accomplish what they could not achieve alone. We still believe in their philoso-

RICH HISTORY, BRIGHT FUTURE

We provide diverse membership benefits and programs in our three mission areas—Education, Legislation and Cooperation.

phy—Individually, we are small. Together, we are a driving force.

Through the years, we moved beyond crops and trains to a full-fledged membership organization, provid-

ing unmatched service, unparalleled discounts and boundless opportunities for personal growth.

Today, we continue to focus on the agricultural industry, rural population and families.

We offered our first insurance policy in 1922 as a membership benefit. Now known as American Farmers & Ranchers (AFR) Insurance, we are a leading domestic insurance carrier in Oklahoma. Each policyholder is a member of the OFU membership organization.

UPCOMING EVENTS	
April 2015	
Southwest Farm & Home Expo, Elk City	April 11-12
Redlands Interscholastic Event, El Reno	April 14
AFR/OFU State Scholarship Deadline	April 15
Oklahoma City Farm Show, OKC	April 16-18
Oklahoma FFA Convention, OKC	April 28-29
May 2015	
National Land, Range & Homesite Judging Contest, OKC	May 5-7
McAlester Family Fun Day	May 9
Memorial Day, AFR Home Office Closed	May 25
OQHA Redbud Spectacular Horse Show, OKC	May 28-June 7
June 2015	
NRHA Derby, OKC	June 20-27
OSU Livestock Judging Camp, Stillwater	June 22-24 & 25-27
July 2015	
Independence Day Observance, AFR Home Office Closed	July 3-4
USTRC Oklahoma Classic Team Roping, Guthrie	July 3-5
OSU Big 3 Field Days, Stillwater	July 14-16
AFR/OFU Teen Leadership Summit, Wanette	July 26-28
AFR/OFU Senior Leadership Summit, Wanette	July 29-Aug. 1

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<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: small;">EDITING STAFF</p> <p>Editor.....Terry Detrick Managing Editor.....Laici Wedel</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: small;">STATE OFFICERS</p> <p>President.....Terry Detrick, Ames Vice President.....John Porter, Edmond Secretary.....Paul Jackson, Ringling</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: small;">STATE EXECUTIVE BOARD</p> <p>District 1.....Terry Peach, Woodward District 2.....Joe Ed Kinder, Frederick District 3.....Jim Shelton, Vinita District 4.....Bob Holley, Antlers At Large #1.....Roy Perryman, Stigler At Large #2...Justin Cowan, Locust Grove At Large #3.....Mike Humble, Cache</p>
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INFORMATION WE MAY COLLECT: We only collect the member's name, address, e-mail address and phone number.
INFORMATION DISCLOSURE :We do not share any of our members' personal information with outside entities. Your personal information is used to mail our monthly publication or advise you of information pertinent to your membership in the organization. It may be used to offer you any of our membership benefits. If you are a policy holder of one of our affiliate insurance companies, your information may be shared to verify correct contact information.