



**Henry
County**

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CALLING ALL AG ENTREPRENEURS: Apply for Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge

The American Farm Bureau Federation, in partnership with Farm Credit, is seeking entrepreneurs to apply online for the 2024 Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge. Now in its 10th year, this national business competition showcases U.S. startup companies developing innovative solutions to challenges faced by America's farmers, ranchers and rural communities.

Farm Bureau is offering \$165,000 in startup funds throughout the course of the competition, which will culminate in the top 10 semi-finalists competing in a live pitch competition in front of Farm Bureau members, investors and industry representatives at the AFBF Convention in January 2024 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

"The future of agriculture and rural communities depends on successful innovation," said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. "Through the Ag Innovation Challenge, we're pleased to recognize start-up companies that provide solutions to problems facing rural America and support farmers in their mission to

provide the food, fuel and fiber we all rely on."

Applications remain open through May 12, and the 10 semi-finalist teams will be announced Sept. 12. Each of the semi-finalist teams will be awarded \$10,000 and a chance to compete to advance to the final round where four teams will receive an additional \$5,000 each. The final four teams will compete to win:

- Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge Winner, for a total of \$50,000
- Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge Runner-up, for a total of \$20,000
- People's Choice Team selected by public vote, for an additional \$5,000 (all 10 semi-finalist teams compete for this honor)

Prior to the live pitch competition, the top 10 semi-finalist teams will participate in pitch training and mentorship from Cornell University's SC Johnson College of Business faculty, and network with representatives from the Agriculture Department's Rural

Business Investment Companies.

Recent winners of the Ag Innovation Challenge include NORDEF, a company that developed technology to produce diesel exhaust fluid at the point of use (2023 Ag Innovation Challenge Winner) and Grain Weevil Corporation, a grain bin safety and management robot that improves farmer well-being by controlling risks and costs (2022 Ag Innovation Challenge Winner). Other examples of successful Ag Innovation Challenge participants, as well as detailed eligibility guidelines and the competition timeline, can be found at fb.org/challenge.

Entrepreneurs must be members of a county or parish Farm Bureau within their state of residence to qualify as top 10 semi-finalists. Applicants who are not Farm Bureau members can visit <https://www.fb.org/about/get-involved#join> to learn about becoming a member.

Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on May 12.

Nursing Scholarship Application Available

Applications are now available for nurse practitioner scholarships through the Illinois Farm Bureau® Rural Nurse Practitioner Scholarship Program. There will be 15 scholarships, worth \$4,000 each, granted this year.

The scholarship program, now in its thirty first year, helps encourage and develop the pool of rural health practitioners to help meet primary health care needs in rural Illinois. Students who

receive scholarships agree to practice for two years in an approved rural area in Illinois.

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must be Illinois residents and be a Registered Nurse accepted or enrolled in an accredited Nurse Practitioner Program. Funding is provided by the Rural Illinois Medical Student Assistance Program (RIMSAP).

Applications are available at county

Farm Bureaus® throughout the state, on the Rural Illinois Medical Student Assistance Program website at RIMSAP.com, or by writing Donna Gallivan, Program Manager, Illinois Farm Bureau, 1701 Towanda Avenue, Bloomington, IL 61701. Applications are due May 1.

For additional information, contact Donna Gallivan at 309-557-2350, or via e-mail at dgallivan@ilfb.org.

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Cost Share Sign Up

Cost Share Sign Up at Henry County SWCD Now Through May 1st.

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For Practice information and applications call or email: 309-937-3377 ext. 3, Elyse.littrel@il.nacdnet.net



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Gold Star FS, along with GROWMARK, awarded the 2022 Enduring Farm & Enduring Farm Plus to acknowledge those farmers who have adopted best management practices that optimize nutrient utilization, leading to long-term soil and water quality while enhancing ROI. Pictured (l to r) are Jon Loitz, FS Crop Specialist; John Oliver and Adam Oliver of Bonnie Crest Farms, a 5th generation, 1,000-acre farm growing corn and soybeans. John and Adam Oliver farm in the Kewanee area.

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Henry & Stark County Health Departments & First Choice Healthcare Announce April Specials in Kewanee & Colona

The Henry and Stark County Health Departments and their First Choice Healthcare Clinics in Kewanee and Colona announce they will showcase their ongoing efforts "to protect and improve the health of the community," during the entire month of April in honor of National Public Health Week, April 3-9, 2023.

In keeping with National Public Health Week's mission of promoting healthier living and achieving the goal of "healthiest nation by 2030," the First Choice Healthcare Clinics will offer clinic specials during the month of April featuring a combination General Health/Thyroid Panel Blood Test for only \$50. This test includes a full lipid "Cholesterol" panel. In addition, the First Choice Healthcare Clinics will offer a \$5 basic Lipid "Cholesterol" Panel. Please note, fasting is recommended for these tests for optimum results.

The First Choice Healthcare Clinics will be offering these specials at both of their locations in Kewanee and Colona. These clinic specials will be available at the following times during the month of April.

KEWANEE: 7:00am-11:00am at First Choice Healthcare, Kewanee, 110 N. Burr Blvd., Kewanee

COLONA: 8:00am-11:00am at First Choice Healthcare, Colona, 103 1st St., Colona.

The clinics are open to all area residents, and appointments are necessary and will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Please note, these lab specials are available on a "Cash Only" basis.

To schedule an appointment or for more information on the First Choice Healthcare Clinics' Public Health Week April Lab Specials call (309) 852-5272 (Kewanee) or 792-4011 (Colona) or find us on Facebook at Henry and Stark County Health Departments & First Choice Healthcare or Follow Us on Twitter and Instagram.



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Poster Contest Winners Announced

The Henry County Farm Bureau Women announced the winners of the "Farm to Table: All About Food and Farming" Poster Contest. Entries were received from students in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades throughout the county. Entries were judged by neatness and the message conveyed. The committee sponsors the contest each year to educate students about the different products that are made from commodities grown on farms in Henry County.

First Grade:

- 1st place – Alena Hoste, Cambridge
- 2nd place – Claire Orlando, Galva
- 3rd place – Roslyn Iest, Homeschool

Second Grade:

- 1st place – Colette Osborne, Homeschool
- 2nd place – Laura Boelens, Cambridge
- 3rd place – Keela Wilder, Wethersfield

Third Grade:

- 1st place – Jeremiah Vandike, Homeschool
- 2nd place – Addison Kirlin, Cambridge
- 3rd place – Addie Hoste, Homeschool



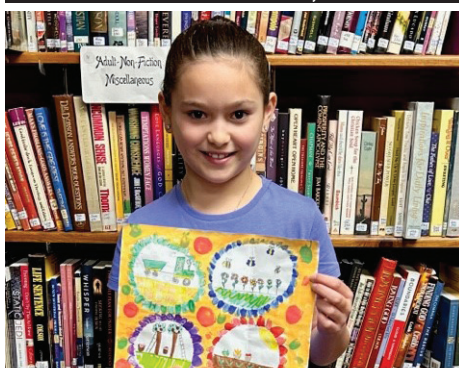
Alena Hoste - First Grade, 1st Place



Claire Orlando - First Grade, 2nd Place



Roslyn Iest - First Grade, 3rd Place



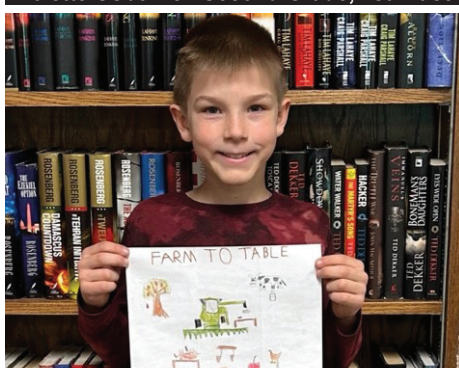
Colette Osborne - Second Grade, 1st Place



Laura Boelens - Second Grade, 2nd Place



Keela Wilder - Second Grade, 3rd Place



Jeremiah Vandike - Third Grade, 1st Place



Addison Kirlin - Third Grade, 2nd Place



Addie Hoste - Third Grade, 3rd Place

Applications Available For Veterinary Student Loans

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Farm Bureau® (IFB) is accepting applications for its Illinois Veterinary Education and Training (IVET) loan program. Loans are available to second-year veterinary students attending any accredited college of veterinary medicine in the U.S. and who are focusing on Illinois food animal medicine.

The Illinois Veterinary Education Training (IVET) Program helps offset the high cost of veterinary education. The program loans up to \$40,000 to as many as three veterinary students each year. Loans are made over a period of two to three years. IVET awards recipients a \$1,500 stipend during

their fourth year in school to help pay expenses associated with clinical rotations. Loans are repaid over five years, during which graduates must commit to working in a food animal practice that services Illinois livestock producers.

“Illinois Farm Bureau encourages veterinary students to pursue a career in caring for food animals,” said Tasha Bunting, IFB associate director of commodities and livestock programs. “To succeed, farmers need the services of a food-animal veterinarian to help them care for their beef cattle, swine, sheep, and poultry. It’s an incredibly rewarding career field that has seen an increase in

demand in recent years.”

Applications are due May 15 and can be found online at www.ilfb.org/IVET. The selection committee will interview eligible applicants in spring 2023. Successful applicants will be notified by mail. Loan disbursements begin in August.

IFB established IVET in 2005. Since then, the organization has awarded more than \$590,000 to 28 veterinary students who focus on caring for food animals in Illinois.

For more information about the program, contact Tasha Bunting at 309-557-2993 or tbunting@ilfb.org.

Henry County Mental Health Alliance presents “Protecting Hope”

The mental health crisis facing our world is enormous, and it calls for us all to take action to care for our families and communities. To address this challenge on a local level plan to attend the 2023 Mental Health Conference “Protecting Hope,” on May 24, at Black Hawk College, East Campus, from 8:00 am until 4:00 pm.

The conference will be highlighted by Jessica Schultz, PhD, Associate Professor of Psychology at Augustana College. Dr. Schultz’s presentation will share insights and tools from positive psychology to cultivate and protect hope while doing the difficult work of advocating for changes to promote mental health and wellness.

Whether you are a mental health provider, a health care provider, a first responder, a member of the community, a teacher, or a pastor, this conference will be

beneficial to you.

A number of break out sessions are scheduled throughout the day. Topics include:

- Sometimes It’s Not Too Good To Be True
- Tick Borne Diseases
- Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder
- Sexual Violence and Mental Health
- Family Farm Resource Initiative
- Mental Health First Aid
- Making Mental Health and Substance Abuse Resources Accessible for All
- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Diet Culture
- Illinois Helpline
- Self-Discovery
- The Future of Behavioral Health
- Alzheimer’s Disease

- Burn Out
- Neurofeedback
- Law Enforcement and Mental Health

In addition to the presentations, participants will have the opportunity to attend a wellness fair to learn about mental health services in our community. A number of “self-care” demonstrations will take place throughout the day.

General registration is \$85.00. A continental breakfast and box lunch are included. To register online go to https://whoava.com/portal/registration/men-ta_202305/ For a comprehensive list of workshops and speakers please download the WHOVA app. For assistance with registration call (309)308-4109 or contact Beth.A.Looney@osfhealthcare.org. Continuing education units are available for social workers, nurses, and teachers. Seating is limited so please register early.

Getting to know your Farm Bureau policy

82. GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

We support:

1. Regulations to protect the public health, safety, and welfare, provided:
 - A. The regulations are based upon scientific data which has been subject to replication and peer review.
 - B. The costs as well as the benefits of the regulations have been carefully weighed.
 - C. The regulations have been subject to independent analysis and public scrutiny.
 - D. Alternatives to regulation have been considered, especially the provision of market-based incentives.
 - E. The regulations respect the practicalities of doing business in the industry being regulated.
2. Cooperating with American Farm Bureau Federation, on the regulatory process to better protect agriculture's interest during rule-making.

3. Requiring the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to collaborate with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in developing regulations impacting agriculture.

4. Member involvement in the regulatory process by responding during comment periods.

5. The review of all state and national regulation to ensure legislative intent is being followed.

6. Legislation to reduce and eliminate duplicative services, programs, and burdensome government regulations.

We oppose establishing law through Executive Orders that circumvent Congress, do not allow for public review and input, exceed constitutional and statutory guidelines, or impose significant economic impact on citizens, businesses, and local or state governments

Henry County Farm Bureau Datebook

APRIL

- 3 HC Pork Producers Meeting, 7pm – HCFB Boardroom
- 7 Good Friday – HCFB Office Closed
- 9 Happy Easter!
- 10 Freezer Meal Pick-Up – 2:30-5 pm
- 12 Katie Laleman, HCFB Manager on WKEI @ 8:25am
- 13 HC Beef Association Meeting, 7pm – HCFB Boardroom
- 18 Tax Day!
- 18 HCFB Board of Directors Meeting, 7:30pm – HCFB Boardroom
- 27 HCFB Women’s Meeting, 6pm – HCFB Boardroom

MAY

- 1 HC Pork Producers Meeting, 7pm – HCFB Boardroom

Henry County Farm Bureau Welcomes New Members

Bolduc Logistics LLC
Gaylen & Barb Elliott
Joshua Jeffries
Terry & Cynthia Looney
Lana McDonough
Rita Krause
Heather Bowen
Triston Highton

Meredith & Rhett Hodgson
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RECIPE



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FARM BUREAU**

Ambrosia Salad with Cool Whip

From the Kitchen of: Deanne Frieders, "This Farm Girl Cooks"

www.thisfarmgirlcooks.com

Ingredients

- 8-ounce container cool whip
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 cup sweetened coconut, shredded
- 3 cups miniature marshmallows (colored is fun)
- 1 1/2 cups pineapple tidbits, well drained
- 1 can (11 ounces) canned mandarin oranges, drained
- 1 cup green grapes, halved
- 1 cup maraschino cherries, halved
- 3/4 cup chopped pecans

Instructions

Reserve a few mandarin oranges and maraschino cherries to decorate the top of the salad.

In a large bowl, combine all the ingredients and stir well.

Refrigerate salad until ready to serve.

Nightingale Attends IFB Leaders to Washington Program



Nine Illinois Farm Bureau leaders met with members of Illinois' congressional delegation on Capitol Hill during a three-day trip as part of IFB's Leaders to Washington Program. They include: Berkeley Boehne, DeKalb (back row, left); Clayton Abbott, Kankakee; Christopher Vick, Pulaski-Alexander; Alex Rhoda, McLean; Steven Nightingale, Henry; Tammy Halterman, IFB District 5 director, Grundy (front row, left); Lance Buzzard, Fayette; Eugene Lamczyk Jr., Washington and Dane Stayton, Macoupin. (Photo by Timothy Eggert)

Huffman Attends AFBF FUSION Conference

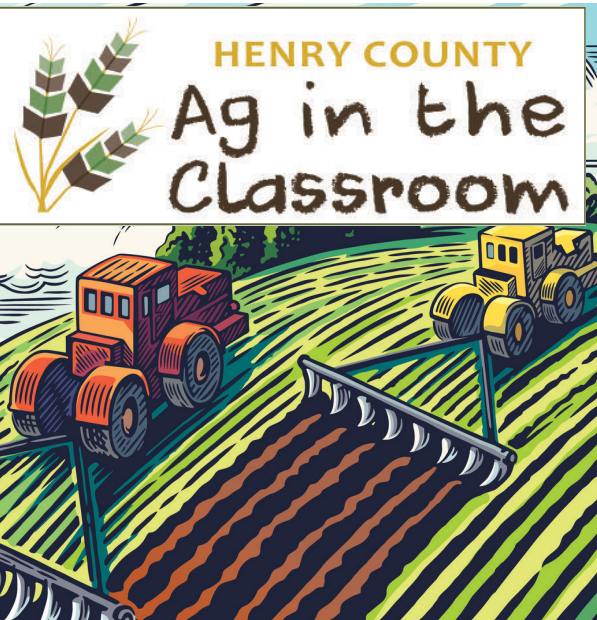


Henry County Young Leader Chair Kate Huffman accepted an award for "most innovative" Harvest for All program from Joby Young, executive vice president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, during the FUSION Conference. The Illinois Farm Bureau Young Leader Committee received a \$250 grant for "most innovative" program for hosting a March Madness NCAA basketball tournament fundraiser. (Source FarmWeekNow)

Farm Bureau's "Bushels for Hunger" Marks 1.5 million Meals



Area farmers are helping local families with a donation to the River Bend Food Bank through the Bushels for Hunger program for the thirteenth straight year. Total contributions now exceed \$300,000 with this year's \$23,603 contribution. This year's total contribution now brings the total amount of meals donated to over 1.5 million. Illinois Farm Bureau District 3 Director Jeff Kirwan presented the donation of \$23,606 to Nancy Renkes, President and CEO of the River Bend Food Bank in Davenport. The grain drive is a joint program coordinated by the Henry, Mercer, and Rock Island County Farm Bureaus in conjunction with Atkinson Grain, Big River Resources, Cargill, CHS, Gavilon, Gold Star FS, Hillsdale Elevator, River Valley Cooperative and Rumbold & Kuhn.



Second Graders Learn about Soybeans



Second grade students at Galva Elementary School learned about soybeans and made "Beanie Babies" with Henry County Ag in the Classroom Coordinator, Paula Janson.

Soybean Lesson Presented in Orion



Sixth grade students at Orion Middle School received their Agriculture in the Classroom lesson all about Soybeans. Students played a game about soy and snacked on soynuts during their program.



JULIE CELEBRATES SAFE DIGGING MONTH

JOLIET, IL – April marks Safe Digging Month in Illinois, reminding homeowners and professional excavators to contact JULIE before every digging project this spring, regardless of the size or depth. Putting up a fence, installing a mailbox post, building a deck or patio and planting trees and shrubs are all examples of projects that require a notification to JULIE first. This is a free service.

Striking a buried utility line can cause injury, repair costs, penalties and inconvenient outages. Here are five important steps before putting a shovel in the ground:

1. Pre-mark the dig site with white paint or flags.
2. Go to www.JULIEBeforeYouDig.com or call 8-1-1 anytime to submit your locate request;
3. Wait the required amount of time (two business days);
4. Respect the marks; and
5. Dig with care.

Member utilities have two business days to respond to your request. Notifications received after 4 p.m. are processed as received at 8 a.m. the next day. So if you want to start your outdoor project on the weekend, contact JULIE before 4 p.m. on Wednesday. JULIE's call center agents are available to receive and process requests 24 hours a day, seven days a week. E-Request is a free, self-service option available anytime at www.JULIEBeforeYouDig.com.

Based in Joliet, the not-for-profit organization represents 1,980 members and covers Illinois, outside the city of Chicago. JULIE personnel do not perform locating or marking services. For an explanation of the color-code markings, DIY project tips and information about the process, visit www.JULIEBeforeYou.com.

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Farmers adapt to weather

“We have always been able to plant,” I reassured Mom while seated at my desk that faces hers. We should have been seated in a tractor. The season was spring and the year 2019, when it rained.

And rained.
And rained.

I took screenshots of weather forecasts, showing seven days of clouds and rain. It seemed unbelievable, and mentally, an out-of-body experience that endured. By May 30 of that year (past our typical planting season), we had 80% of our acres yet to plant and had dumped 10-plus inches from the rain gauge. The guys used the rainy days to start maintenance on harvest machinery. They had faith that we would have a crop to harvest.

For generations, farmers have endured weather stresses that impact farm production and livelihoods, and they can name those most-adverse years

like sports statistics. Thankfully, technology and modern research give us an adaptive edge, building resilience in the face of weather variability.

Our planters hold more seed in one fill than Grandpa could plant in a single day in the 1970s. Bigger and faster planters plant crops quicker and more precisely, necessary with larger farm sizes today. Smartphones show live subscription weather forecasts and field-specific precipitation totals. Tile drainage systems improve water management within fields.

Data shows that over time weather comes with greater variability and extremes from cold to hot and dry to wet. Since 1980, the number of days it has rained more than two inches has doubled in Illinois, a statistic cited in a docuseries at WatchUs-Grow.org. More rain in a shorter time can trigger crop losses and soil erosion, but farmers have ad-

justed to protect crops and the environment.

More than ever on our farm and farms across the state, farmers use cover crops, or groundcover between primary crops. They install grass filter strips along streams and use reduced tillage practices to slow and filter water flowing across the land.

When the weather finally cooperated in June 2019, we had a full crew and machines ready to act. The air conditioning stopped working in a tractor, but my brother sweated it out. We planted four times more acres in a day than in the prime of Grandpa’s career and dutifully planted every acre we could.

About the author: Joanie Stiers farms with her family, growing corn, soybeans, wheat and hay and raising beef cattle and backyard chickens in West-Central Illinois.

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Henry County Soil and Water District sells 55 Gallon Rain Barrells. We have three different colors to choose from Grey, Black and Terracotta. They are \$75.00 a piece please let us know if you would like to order any at 309-937-3377 ext 3.

Rain barrels capture water from a roof and hold it for later use such as on lawns, gardens, or indoor plants. Collecting roof runoff in rain barrels reduces the amount of water that flows from your property. It is a great way to conserve water and it is free water for use in your landscape.

What are the benefits of using a rain barrel? They reduce runoff and pollution, reduce erosion, reduce flooding, reduce sewer backups, save money on water bills, help keep creeks and rivers healthy, and raise stormwater awareness.