

Women's Connection

Promoting the volunteer work of Farm Bureau Women's Committees across Arkansas

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Donna Bemis and I are the new chairwoman and vice chairwoman of your state women's committee, and we are very excited to serve you this year. First of all I want to say a big, "thank you!" to Janice Marsh for doing such a great job chairing our state committee the past three years. It was a pleasure to serve with her.



Peggy Miller
chairwoman

The committee once again donated \$4,000 in Sam's Club gift cards to the Ronald McDonald House in Little Rock. (These gift cards enable the staff there to purchase easy-to-prepare meals and fresh meat and milk for the benefit of families while their children are receiving treatment at Arkansas Children's Hospital.) We feel very honored to be able to help this great cause.

The theme of the 2016 State Women's Conference in Little Rock was "Farm Bureau Women Building Community through Service to Others". There were a nice variety of workshops available to attend such as social media etiquette, how to use blood pressure machines, ag-tivate and the backpack program for local schools. There was also a great discussion about continuing to farm after the death of a spouse. Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge was a special guest and spoke to us about being involved in politics. The conference also featured a fabulous dinner at the Governor's Mansion.

New members who are serving on the state committee this year are Alechia Meador of Carroll County, Kelly Swinney of Cleveland County and Carlee Helms of Clark County.

Spring is the time when many of you

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HARRY WILLEMS photo

On March 4, the Arkansas Farm Bureau State Women's Committee and county leaders visited Little Rock to make their **annual donation** to Ronald McDonald House Charities of Arkansas. A total of \$4,000 in Sam's Club gift cards were donated to help the charity purchase food used to feed families who stay at the facility while their children are being treated at Arkansas Children's Hospital.

COUNTY ACTIVITIES

The following activity summaries were submitted by the county Farm Bureau Women's Committees:

Arkansas: The committee participated in a local "Acres of Help" Program and sponsored the Arkansas County Conservation District Mississippi River Basin Initiative.

Benton: The committee conducted a Farm Bureau Week planning meeting and presented the state poster contest winner with his check.

Boone: Committee members attended the 2016 AFBF convention in Orlando and visited the Ag in the Classroom booth for ideas. The committee also budgeted funds for its annual safety days for 4th graders and served food to board members at their monthly meeting.

Bradley: Committee members assisted

with a tomato variety display at the Pink Tomato Festival, handed out ag placemats at the county fair and helped set up a tomato shed for the 2015 harvest season. The committee also had bottled water with the Farm Bureau logo available for workers.

Calhoun: The committee met with a student representative with the Friends of the Library Club about future ag literacy projects. Committee members also volunteered at the local clothes closet and assisted with enlisting volunteers to help with donations to the Salvation Army. Committee members also decorated the county office for Christmas and attended the AFBF convention in Orlando.

Carroll: The committee conducted the program, "Bread: the Staff of Life," for K-2 classes in Berryville. This included reading the

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COUNTY ACTIVITIES

2016 ARFB STATE WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

As your state women's committee, we are here to be a resource and assist you in your ag promotion activities. Please feel free to contact us at any time.

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STEVE EDDINGTON photo

Members of the ArFB State Women's Committee and county committee members pose for a photo while attending the American Farm Bureau annual convention in Orlando Jan. 10-13. It was the last official function for Janice Marsh (third from left, back row) of Woodruff County as chair of the state committee. Donna Bemis and Peggy Miller (second and third from left, front row) began their terms as vice chairwoman and chairwoman of the committee in January.

book, viewing a video and allowing the children to enjoy a bread and butter treat. The committee also participated in the county Flu Clinic by providing a chili and dessert lunch and donated "Fun on the Farm" books and Junior Ag Readers to the Green Forest Elementary library. A donation was also made to the local backpack program.

Chicot: The committee conducted a poster contests at St. Mary's Catholic School, Eudora Elementary and Dermott Public Schools. Thirty students participated and prizes were awarded to the winners.

Clark: The committee judged a dairy recipe contest, sponsored and hosted the annual Christmas steak dinner for the county board and Farm Family of the Year. The committee also distributed fire wood to shut-ins in the area, purchased items for an Angel Tree Child and purchased and delivered a used television to the nursing home for patients to enjoy.

Clay: Committee member Debbie Pollard attended the AFBF convention in Orlando and acquired two copies of the American Farm Bureau Book of the Year, "First Peas to the Table," which the committee plans to donate to the Piggott Elementary Library.

Cleburne: The committee conducted a lesson on rice and cotton for 65 5th and 6th-grade students in the county. The committee also presented information to 4-H leaders and local teachers about the upcoming Dairy Foods Contest and taught a pumpkin patch pie lesson to four classes. The committee chair attended the AFBF Convention in Orlando.

Cleveland: The committee donated ag readers and food connection posters to local schools. The committee also donated a classroom set of the book, "Agriculture: The Roots of Arkansas," to a 6th-grade class at a local school and helped students make corn putty following the instructions in the corn ag reader. Committee members spoke to 6th-grade students at Woodlawn Elementary about Arkansas crops. A committee member shared information about safety programs offered by Farm Bureau to local schools.

Columbia: The Committee contacted YF&R participants about state competitions and a fish fry at Jeremy Kitchen's farm. Committee members also delivered Ag in the Classroom information for poster and essay contests to three schools, then collected and judged the entries and awarded certificates to the top three winners in Emerson, Taylor and Columbia Christian Schools. Deborah Dooley is also county president and conducted two County Farm Bureau meetings, worked with five youth on their Sew With Cotton projects and attended the AFBF Convention in Orlando as an alternate voting delegate.

Conway: The committee conducted an Ag in the Classroom coloring, poster and essay contest. The committee donated \$100 to this program and the winners. The 2nd-place essay winner in the statewide contest was from Conway County. Committee members also promoted Arkansas agriculture to elementary students by conducting programs at Sacred Heart, Nemo Vista and Wonderview Schools. Arkansas agriculture programs were presented to students in grades 7-12 at

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Montgomery County, (4-H dairy contest winners)



Jackson County, (Back Pack Program donations)

COUNTY CLOSE-UPS



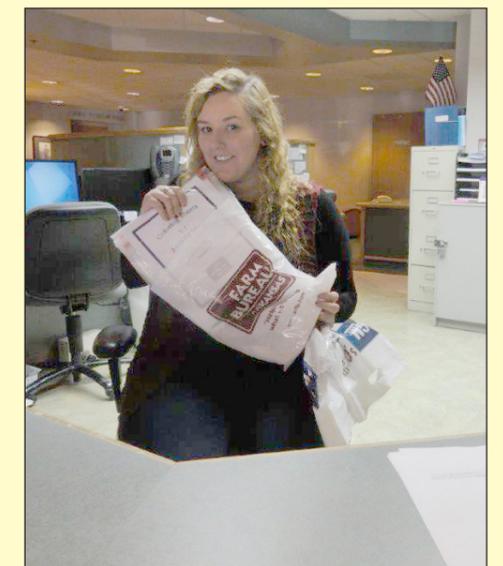
Cleveland County, (Making corn putty)



Monroe County, (Poster Contest winners)



Van Buren County, (Poster Contest winners)



Independence County, (ER donations)

COUNTY ACTIVITIES

Sacred Heart school during its career and mini-course day. Students took part in hands-on learning experiments and were able to sample healthy snacks.

Craighead: Committee members Karie Gibson and Melissa Cureton attended the 2015 Acre of Hope. Proceeds from the event benefit the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas. Committee member Angie Hodges represented the district on the State Women's Committee and helped prepare a meal for residents of Little Rock's Ronald McDonald House. She also judged dishes at the Arkansas State Fair rice contest, and participated in a "Pack Shack" hunger relief event where the committee filled food bags with rice and other products at the Rice Depot. Committee member Stephanie Smith organized a "Breakfast with Santa" at Brookland Elementary school.

Crawford: The committee arranged for Matt Jackson to conduct a dairy program for 8th-grade students at Butterfield Jr. High using the Farm Bureau milking cow. Committee members also conducted a dairy program for 4th-grade students at Marvin Elementary and showed them how to make ice cream in a bag.

Cross: A committee member attended the Arkansas Rice Council meeting while the committee conducted a 4-H beekeeping essay contest. Committee members volunteered at the NEA Food Bank, while others visited residents of an area nursing home during the holidays.

Drew: The committee conducted a beef promotion project with the local elementary school and grilled and served hamburgers to students afterward. The committee also distributed items for the coloring, poster and essay contest to local schools.

Garland: The committee is participating in the FACES (Faculty and Community Enriching Students) program by conducting a six week Down On The Farm program at Fountain Lake Elementary School. Forty four students are enrolled, and each week a different animal was featured. Students were introduced to 4-H and information on the care, feeding and showing of animals was explained. Farm Bureau student advisors and women's committee members conducted the classes. Coloring sheets of each animal were distributed to each student along with 4-H activity books. The committee also conducted a program on animal agriculture at Lakeside Elementary, which included goats, a calf, rabbits, chickens and a horse.

Grant: The committee conducted the "Serving Up My Plate" program for 3rd and 5th graders at Sheridan Intermediate School and the "Pick A Better Snack" for 4th and 6th graders. 761 students took part. The



GARLAND CO. FB photo

These students in the **Country Clovers 4-H Club** have been working with the Garland Co. FB Women's Committee gathering food donations for the Farmers Feeding Families and Backpack Programs. These initiatives aim to assist existing food programs to ensure all community members have access to healthy, nutritious food.

committee also conducted a nutrition exhibit at a local grocery store that reached 19 shoppers and manned a similar exhibit at the Sheridan Family Fitness Night that reached more than 50 parents and students.

Howard: The committee sponsored its county Sew With Cotton contest winner Maye Lamb in the state contest in Little Rock.

Independence: Committee members read "The Apple Orchard Riddle" to 17 kindergarten students and 25 3rd graders and the book "Vegetable Friends" to 25 kindergarten students. The committee also read the books, "How Did That Get in My Soup" to 20 Head Start students and "First Peas to the Table" and "Rabbit Food" to 22 kindergarten students. The committee also conducted an after-school program in conjunction with the county extension office called Kids in the Kitchen, where they made trail mix, healthy fruit pies, milk shakes and pizza wraps.

Izard: The committee planned and hosted a dinner banquet for Farm Bureau employees and the county board of directors. The committee also collected \$220 for the Izard County Angel Tree project.

Jackson: The committee conducted a coloring book, poster and essay contest and awarded Walmart gift cards to the winners. The committee also donated \$100 to a local 4-H camp, assisted with the 4-H banquet, participated in the Coats for Kids program and delivered cookie trays to the local police department,

newspaper and a bank as an expression of appreciation for their support. A committee member also attended the AFBF Convention in Orlando.

Lafayette: The committee donated \$250 to the county Department of Human Services to sponsor Christmas for foster children or children in need. Committee members also attended the Arkansas Farm Bureau annual convention and AFBF Convention in Orlando.

Lee: The committee donated items to the Marianna Chamber of Commerce banquet for the silent auction. The committee also donated toys for the local Toys for Tots campaign.

Little River: A committee member attended the National Cattlemen's conference in San Diego and other committee members assisted with the local Cattlemen's Association meeting and served food. The committee also bought Christmas gifts for needy children in the county and donated money to the Shop-with-a-Cop Christmas program.

Lonoke: Committee members taught Arkansas agriculture lessons on edible soils, rice and soybeans to first-grade classes at a local elementary school. The committee also conducted a veterinary science lesson for local youth and conducted training for 4-H teen leaders to teach Healthy Living programs.

Miller: The committee arranged for a defensive

driving class to be conducted by insurance agent Melinda Alexander for students at Genoa High School. The students were informed about Farm Bureau scholarships that are available and the value of a Farm Bureau membership. A committee member continues to serve on the National Conservation Foundation executive board, in addition to the County Conservation Board.

Mississippi: The committee conducted a coloring book and poster contest for elementary students and submitted the names of the winners to the state office for judging in the state contest. Photos of the three county winners were submitted to local newspapers. The committee also placed blood pressure machines in county offices for use by our customers, promoting the importance of having good blood pressure. A blood pressure unit was also donated to a local community center.

Monroe: The committee conducted a coloring book and poster contest for students at Clarendon and Brinkley Partee Elementary schools. Cash prizes were awarded to the winners. Photos of the winners and their teachers were submitted to the local newspaper.

Montgomery: The committee conducted a dairy recipe contest and awarded cash prizes to the winners. The committee also conducted lessons on good nutrition in all three county schools and assisted Caddo Hills in applying for an Outdoor Classroom Garden Grant and made a Christmas donation to yarn workers who make hats, gloves and scarves for school children.

Newton: The winner of the county's Sew with Cotton contest participated in the state contest at the Farm Bureau annual convention and placed second in the sportswear division. The committee chair participated in 32 separate sessions to make quilts, hats, mittens, afghans, blankets and toys to be donated to the Arkansas Children's Home. Committee members also sorted and packed toys for the community toy drive.

North Logan: Committee members prepared and served food to approximately 100 children at the CASA Children's Tea Party to benefit foster children for Christmas. They also attended a school assembly at St. Joseph Elementary in Paris to present a check to Hunter Rhinehart who earned third place in the state essay contest. A photo of the presentation was submitted and published in the *Paris Express* newspaper.

Perry: The committee made plans to work with elementary school teachers on making curriculum and materials available to them as needed. The committee is also assisting a local student with his entry in the safety poster contest.

Polk: Committee members are now making weekly

COUNTY ACTIVITIES



MONTGOMERY CO. FB photo

Students at Caddo Hills Elementary in Montgomery County help in the construction of the school's outdoor garden. As part of the project the students planted seeds under grow lights before transplanting their vegetable plants in the raised beds. Outdoor Classroom gardens help students learn how to grow, tend and harvest their own produce.

AgVocates posts on social media. They also promoted the coloring book and safety poster contest in county schools.

Pope: The committee co-sponsored the Farm to You program at local schools, and approximately 800 students participated. Committee members assisted the county extension office with an activity on healthy eating. A member of the committee is serving on the state women's committee, attended the AFBF Convention in Orlando and was selected to serve on the President's Leadership Council.

Scott: The committee conducted a coloring book and poster contest for third-grade students at Waldron Elementary and fifth and sixth-grade students at Mansfield.

Searcy: The committee conducted a coloring book contest for local kindergarten and first and second-grade students and awarded prizes to the winners. The committee also donated food to the local Food Pantry and donated to the Angel Tree program. Committee members also provided hotdogs and hamburgers to veterans on Veteran's Day.

Sevier: A committee member attended the Simmons Bank Farm Summit on commodities. The committee also arranged for a school bus safety program to be conducted at DeQueen Elementary. And a committee

member attended the AFBF Convention in Orlando.

South Logan: Committee members visited fourth-grade students at Booneville and Magazine elementary schools to promote the production of food in America and Arkansas from the 1800s to the present. The discussion included primitive gardening by native Americans and early settlers to the use of tractors, plows, cultivators and combines in farming today. Rice packets were given to students. Committee Chair Ruby Jackson and Magazine High School student Rebekah Dobson provided a chili supper for the Booneville Lion's Club in appreciation of the work it does in providing visual aids in the community.

St. Francis: The committee conducted an Ag in the Classroom coloring contest for K-2nd grade students in the elementary school. Committee members also attended the cotton luncheon and fashion show at the state convention in Little Rock and read books on Arkansas commodities to third-grade students. The committee also distributed farm safety activity booklets to the elementary classes.

Stone: The committee conducted an Ag in the Classroom coloring contest and awarded a \$20 gift card to the winner. Committee member Linda Sutterfield attended the Stone County Cattlemen's meeting and the committee donated \$300 to the Mountain View first-grade classes for the art supply program. Dan and Pat

COUNTY ACTIVITIES

Stewart cooked and baked for the chili supper for the Luber School House Preservation Association and Pat hosted the Mountain View Master Gardener Christmas Meeting.

Union: The committee conducted an Ag in the Classroom coloring and poster contest in three schools. Winners were awarded cash prizes for first, second and third place. A committee member donated 100 pounds of rice and beans to Haiti, while the committee conducted a chili cook-off featuring beef and pork recipes. The committee also donated \$100 to the Parkers Chapel school backpack program, \$100 to Operation Christmas Child to ship boxes and \$50 to the 4-H club that collected the most canned goods.

Van Buren: The committee conducted its Ag in the Classroom coloring and essay contest, awarded prizes to the winners and submitted the winning entries to the state competition. Photos of the winners were submitted to county newspapers and the school's social media coordinator. They were also posted on the county Farm Bureau's Facebook page. 160 students participated. Committee member Cindy Wilson contacted school representatives and Donette Spann with the Arkansas Beef Council to schedule programs to the Clinton After-School Program and to Family and Consumer Science classes in the three county high schools. Committee member Becky Wood created a new agriculture related lesson plan for an upcoming high school soup contest.

Washington: The committee supports the backpack program at West Fork and regularly donated food to fill backpacks during the period. The committee also delivered cookies during the holidays to libraries, police and fire stations and other public agencies. An Ag in the Classroom poster and essay contest was conducted at schools throughout the county. Entries were judged, and winners were submitted to the state competition. The committee also developed an Ag in

the Classroom Facebook page and donated Arkansas Agriculture Pocket Facts to the Prairie Grove post office, Children's Library, plus police and fire departments throughout the county.

White: The committee conducted an Ag in the Classroom coloring contest for students at Westside Elementary school. Winners received a Sonic gift card. Plans were made for conducting after-school programs in various branches of White County Regional Library System, and ATV safety programs were promoted at Beebe Junior and Senior High School. A committee member prepared "talking points" for board members to use when contacting legislators concerning office space for the White County Cooperative Extension Service. Photos of activities conducted during the period were posted on the committee's Facebook page, while two feature articles and photos were published appeared in the *Searcy Daily Citizen* and *Beebe News*.

Woodruff: The committee planned and attended the Sew with Cotton luncheon and judged entries in the county contest. Committee Chair Janice Marsh attended Rice Council meetings in New Orleans, in addition to the state Resolutions Committee meeting and AFBF Convention in Orlando. The committee also conducted an Ag in the Classroom coloring book, poster and essay contest and assisted with a nutrition education and diabetes education program.

Yell: The committee conducted an incubator and embryo program for third-grade students in Danville. The activity reached 60 children and three adults.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS continued from page 1

conduct Ag in the Classroom programs with your local schools before the end of the school year. If you don't have one planned yet, I encourage your committee to consider ways to educate students about your local agriculture.

Finally, in addition to Janice, I want to thank Roberta Golmon of Baxter County and Sonya Harrell of Calhoun County for their service the past two years. They will all be greatly missed.

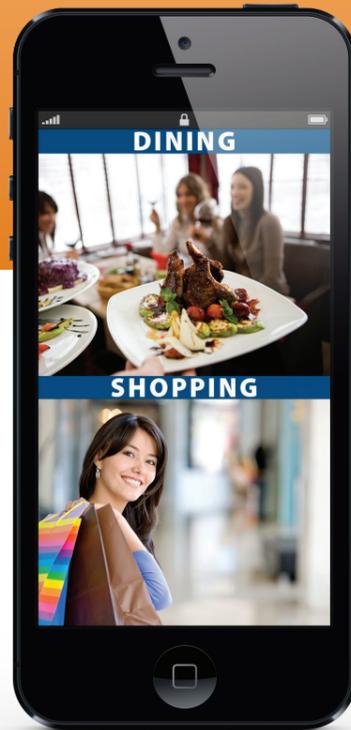
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ARFB WOMEN'S COMMITTEE CALENDAR

| Sun. | Mon. | Tue. | Wed. | Thu. | Fri. | Sat. |
|--|--|------|---|--|---------|---------------------------------------|
| | | | | | APRIL 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 <small>Arkansas' 91st General Assembly Convenes Fiscal Session</small> | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 <small>Administrative Professionals Day</small> | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| MAY 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 <small>Member Service Representatives Conference in Little Rock</small> | 5 <small>National Day of Prayer Cinco de Mayo</small> | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 <small>Armed Forces Day</small> |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 FB Offices Closed for Memorial Day <small>Memorial Day</small> | 31 | JUNE 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| <small>AFB SPARC Conference, in Salt Lake City, UT</small> | | | <small>Teen Challenge, at 4-H Center in Ferndale</small> | | | |
| 19 <small>Fathers Day</small> | 20 <small>First Day of Summer</small> | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 <small>Easter</small> | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |