



# Rural Living

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

---

**SEPTEMBER 1987**

**Inside: Parching Drought  
Dries Up Harvest Hopes**

---

# NATIONAL FARM SAFETY WEEK

September  
20-26, 1987



**FARM SAFETY  
MAKES GOOD \$ENSE**

# Rural Living

MICHIGAN FARM NEWS

A Publication of the Michigan Farm Bureau



PHOTO BY MARCIA DITCHIE

## Tune in to the "Farm Bureau Review"

Hear the latest information on Farm Bureau organizational activities and events on the weekly 5-minute "Farm Bureau Review" radio show aired on these stations:

STATION	AIR TIME
WATZ, Alpena	6:20 a.m. Sat
WABJ, Adrian	12:27 p.m. Sat
WPAG, Ann Arbor	6:20 a.m. Sat
WLEW, Bad Axe	.
WHFB, Benton Harbor	6:20 a.m. Sat
WBRN, Big Rapids	.
WKYO, Caro	6:20 a.m. Sat
WTVB, Coldwater	12:55 p.m. Tues
WDOW, Dowagiac	6:20 a.m. Sat
WZXM, Gaylord	.
WPLB, Greenville	.
WCSR, Hillsdale	6:20 a.m. Sat
WHTC, Holland	12:15 p.m. Sat
WKZO, Kalamazoo	.
WKLA, Ludington	.
WSMA, Marine City	6:20 a.m. Sat
WDMJ, Marquette	7:17 a.m. Sat
WCEN, Mt. Pleasant	6:20 a.m. Sat
WOAP, Owosso	6:20 a.m. Sat
WSGW, Saginaw	5:05-6 a.m. Sat
WMKC, St. Ignace	.
WMLM, St. Louis	6:30 a.m. Sat
WMIC, Sandusky	6:20 a.m. Sat
WKJC, Tawas City	6:20 a.m. Sat
WTCM, Traverse City	6:30 a.m. Sat
WBMB, West Branch	6:20 a.m. Sat

\*Contact the station for day and time of airing

A new Michigan Farm Bureau information service to enhance the activities of county Farm Bureaus and Community Action Groups.

Contact your local station. Let them know you appreciate their airing of the "Farm Bureau Review"!

GET THE LATEST SCOOP ON  
YOUR ORGANIZATION...

## About the Cover

August rains have eased the suffering of some drought stressed crops throughout the state, but some areas will, at best, have reduced yields.

## In This Issue

- 8 Rails to Trails** A proposal to convert an abandoned railroad line into a recreational trail has developed into a lawsuit as Missouri farmers fight to claim rights to the abandoned property.
- 10 Parching Drought Dries Up Harvest Hopes** Hot, dry days from June to August have taken their toll on fields of corn, alfalfa, beans and sugar beets in the band of mid-Michigan counties that needed a comeback harvest the most.
- 11 Canadian Trade Tour Creates Better Understanding** A delegation of FB presidents, including MFB President Jack Laurie, recently traveled to Canada on a trade mission to help ensure that the voice of production agriculture is heard in current trade discussions.

## Columns

President's Message . . . . .	4	Grassroots Perspective . . . . .	18
Legislative Review . . . . .	6	Agronomic Update . . . . .	20
Country Almanac . . . . .	14	Farm Bureau Market Place . . . . .	23
Rural Exchange . . . . .	15	Advertisers' Index . . . . .	23

**Rural Living is Published Monthly:** on the first day, by the Michigan Farm Bureau Information and Public Relations Division, except during July and August when a combined issue is published on July 15. Publication and editorial offices at 7373 West Saginaw Highway, Lansing, Mich. 48917, Post Office Box 30960 (zip 48909); phone 517-323-7000, extension 510.

**Subscriptions:** \$1.50 per year to members, included in annual dues. \$3.00 per year non-members in Michigan, \$5.00 per year non-members out of state. Publication No. 345040. Established Jan. 13, 1923 as Michigan Farm News, name changed to Michigan Farm News Rural Living Dec. 1, 1981. Third-class postage paid at Lansing, Michigan, and at additional mailing offices.

**Editorial:** Connie Turbin, Editor and Business Manager; Donna Wilber, Contributing Editor; Marcia Ditchie, Associate Editor; Kimberly Marshall, Associate Editor and Production Manager.

**Officers:** Michigan Farm Bureau President, Jack Laurie, Cass City; Vice President, Wayne Wood, Marlette; Administrative Director, Charles Burkett; Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer, Tom Parker; Secretary, William S. Wilkinson.

**Directors:** District 1, Marlin Outman, Constantine; District 2, Blaine VanSickle, Marshall; District 3, James Sayre, Belleville; District 4, Charleen Thompson, Freeport; District 5, Mark Smuts, Charlotte; District 6, Jack Laurie, Cass City; District 7, Larry Snider, Hart; District 8, Lyle LeCronier, Freeland; District 9, Robert Gregory, Traverse City; District 10, Margaret Kartes, West Branch; District 11, Robert Wahmhoff, Baraga. At-large: David Conklin, Corunna; Wayne Wood, Marlette; Richard Leach, Saginaw; Farm Bureau Women: Diane Horning, Manchester. Young Farmers: Ed Cagney, Scotts.



## Seeds

- On Aug. 9, Jack and Betty Laurie welcomed District VI county FB Presidents to their Tuscola County farm for an outdoor barbecue. MFB's District VI includes Huron, Lapeer, Macomb, St. Clair, Sanilac, and Tuscola counties.
- Members of the State Policy Development Committee met at FB Center, Aug. 13. Laurie, who served many years as chairperson of the committee, emphasized to the committee members the importance of their role in MFB's policy development process.
- President Laurie chaired the MFB Statewide Policy Development Conference in Lansing, Aug. 20. The information and discussion meeting was attended by county and state FB leaders.
- During August, President Laurie attended county FB annual meetings in Bay, Gratiot, and Tuscola counties.

## Your Opinion Counts

This summer Farm Bureau members had an opportunity to participate in two major events sponsored by our organization.

The first of these — the Farm Bureau and affiliate companies exhibit at Ag Expo — gave us a chance to visit with other members, talk to staff people from our affiliate companies and look at the programs and services that our organization has to offer.

The second opportunity, held in conjunction with Ag Expo, was our Summerfest celebration of 50 years of service by our Community Action Group program. The participation in this fun event by members from all over the state and by staff people from all of our companies was a positive sign that Farm Bureau is a vibrant and growing organization.

This Summerfest tribute was a well deserved recognition of the impact Community Action Groups have had on Farm Bureau and agriculture. No other organization offers farm people monthly opportunities to regularly discuss issues and develop policy.

The Farm Bureau policy development process is a unique example of what our members can do to impress upon others the concerns that they, as farmers, have regarding the future of agriculture and the future of their Farm Bureau organization. This process, initiated at the local level, offers individual farmers the opportunity to have their voices heard in the development of the policy that directs their organization and their industry.

A survey of visitors to the MFB exhibit at Ag Expo asked people why they belonged to Farm Bureau. Forty-two percent answered that "Farm Bureau gives me a chance to voice my opinion on what its policies should be."

It's now policy development time — your opportunity to have an impact on your organization.

Attend your county annual meeting. Study the proposed policy resolutions, especially the local issues that become the policy of your county Farm Bureau.

Consider carefully the resolutions that deal with state and national issues. The resolutions approved by your county will be forwarded to the MFB State Policy Development Committee for further study and input for possible presentation to the voting delegates at the State Annual Meeting in Grand Rapids, Dec. 1-4.

We have a big job ahead of us in addressing the challenges that face our agricultural industry: How do we expand our export markets? How do we deal effectively with the opportunities of biotechnology? How do we handle environmental problems like animal waste control?

This is our opportunity to make our voices heard on these issues. Don't just talk about these issues and concerns. Take action! Pick up and use the tool that Farm Bureau gives to you for your farm operation — the tool of policy development.

A large, stylized handwritten signature of Jack Laurie in cursive script.

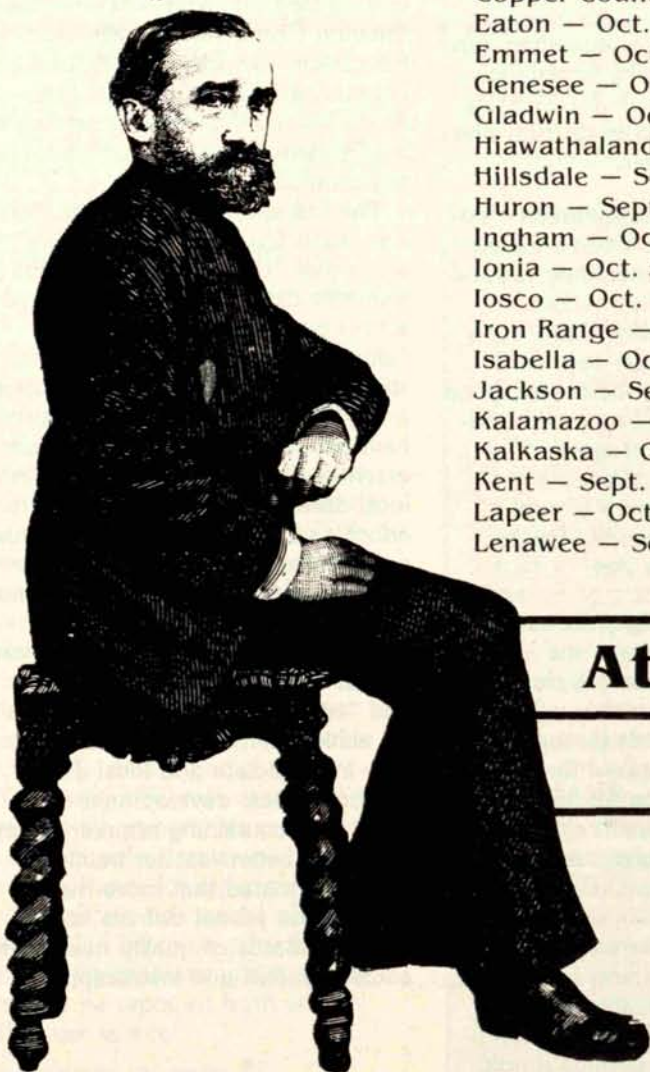
*Jack Laurie, President  
Michigan Farm Bureau*

# Good Ideas Get Better When They're Shared

- |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Alcona — Oct. 26         | Livingston — Oct. 21         |
| Allegan — Oct. 8         | Mackinac-Luce — Oct. 12      |
| Alpena — Oct. 22         | Macomb — Oct. 22             |
| Antrim — Oct. 14         | Manistee*                    |
| Arenac — Oct. 12         | Mason — Oct. 6               |
| Barry — Sept. 24         | Mecosta*                     |
| Benzie — Sept. 21        | Menominee — Oct. 8           |
| Berrien — Oct. 30        | Midland — Sept. 10           |
| Branch — Sept. 21        | Missaukee — Oct. 6           |
| Calhoun — Oct. 6         | Monroe — Sept. 15            |
| Cass — Oct. 5            | Montcalm — Oct. 22           |
| Charlevoix — Oct. 10     | Montmorency — Oct. 21        |
| Cheboygan — Oct. 15      | Muskegon — Oct. 15           |
| Chippewa — Oct. 20       | Newaygo — Oct. 8             |
| Clare — Oct. 3           | Northwest Michigan — Oct. 14 |
| Clinton — Oct. 17        | Oakland — Oct. 8             |
| Copper Country — Oct. 10 | Oceana — Oct. 19             |
| Eaton — Oct. 3           | Ogemaw — Oct. 29             |
| Emmet — Oct. 26          | Osceola — Oct. 20            |
| Genesee — Oct. 6         | Otsego*                      |
| Gladwin — Oct. 6         | Ottawa — Oct. 15             |
| Hiawathaland — Oct. 29   | Presque Isle — Oct. 6        |
| Hillsdale — Sept. 10     | St. Clair — Sept. 22         |
| Huron — Sept. 2          | St. Joseph — Oct. 31         |
| Ingham — Oct. 10         | Sanilac — Sept. 19           |
| Ionia — Oct. 5           | Shiawassee — Sept. 26        |
| Iosco — Oct. 14          | Van Buren*                   |
| Iron Range — Oct. 18     | Washtenaw — Oct. 7           |
| Isabella — Oct. 14       | Wayne — Oct. 6               |
| Jackson — Sept. 16       | Wexford — Oct. 13            |
| Kalamazoo — Oct. 6       |                              |
| Kalkaska — Oct. 21       |                              |
| Kent — Sept. 15          |                              |
| Lapeer — Oct. 8          |                              |
| Lenawee — Sept. 22       |                              |

\*Date not set at press time

Counties not listed  
have already held their  
1987 annual meeting



## Attend Your County Annual Meeting

Contact your county Farm Bureau  
secretary for more information

## Congress to Reconvene Sept. 9

### Washington

■ **0-92 Measure** — The U.S. House passed the 0-92 legislation that the House Agriculture Committee had reported out just days before the Congress was scheduled for recess. The bill provides that producers participating in wheat and feed grain commodity programs will have the option of planting none of their acreage bases and still qualify for 92% of their full deficiency payment.

The Senate has not acted on the bill, so no additional developments can be expected until Congress returns to work on Sept. 9. However, more opposition to the measure is expected in the Senate than in the House.

■ **FIFRA Legislation** — The House and Senate agriculture committees are expected to begin mark-up of FIFRA (Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act) legislation soon after returning from the August recess. FB has stated opposition to the Senate bill (S. 1516) because it contains none of the provisions sought by agricultural groups in last year's legislation.

The House bill (H.R. 2463) contains acceptable language on uniform tolerances and groundwater protection. However, farmer liability language rewritten by the Agriculture-Energy-Commerce Committee last year is flawed and must be corrected.

FB will be seeking provisions which protect farmers from liability and damages or remedial actions under federal environmental laws. Remedial action might include having to supply alternative drinking water to affected homes, installation of filters on contaminated wells, or

having to pay for the construction of new wells. Authority for such action is clearly provided in both the Superfund and Safe Drinking Water Act.

Separate legislation amending FIFRA has been introduced that will give clear and expressed authority to local governments to regulate the use of pesticide products. FIFRA currently limits pesticide regulation to federal or state governments. The bill, S. 1524, changes the definition of a state to include all political subdivisions of a state, i.e., towns, counties, municipalities, and possibly school districts.

FB will oppose this legislation. Unchecked local authority to regulate pesticides would result in conflicting and competing ordinances from one jurisdiction to another.

■ **Export Enhancement Program** — The USDA has announced that it will continue to fund approved sales under the Export Enhancement Program (EEP) even though congressionally approved funding may run out before adoption of a trade bill that will replenish funding and extend the program. The authority for the continuance is granted to the secretary of agriculture in the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act.

■ **Federal Budget Reconciliation** — Before the August recess, Congress passed a short-term debt ceiling extension that will cover the government needs through Sept. 23. The action increased the temporary debt ceiling to \$2.35 trillion. Work on the permanent ceiling will resume when congressional members return to Washington, D.C., Sept. 9.

FB continues to be concerned about the budget, tax and farm program implications of any action taken in Congress in the name of budget reduction. Namely, the means of achieving savings should

not reverse the major policy objectives of the 1985 farm bill which include market price competitiveness, income protection and stocks reduction. □

### Lansing

■ **Property Tax/School Finance Reform Update** — The Michigan School Finance Commission (appointed last February) is expected to release a final report by mid-September. The commission was divided into four subcommittees: Steering Committee, Quality and Education, Property Tax/School Finance, and Distribution of State Aid. FB's representative is serving on the Property Tax/School Finance Subcommittee.

The first draft proposal from the Education Quality Subcommittee states that "Education must still be primarily directed by locally elected school boards..." However, the "ultimate responsibility" lies with the state as required by the Constitution and, "all children in the state must have an equal opportunity to learn essential skills, etc." Therefore, "all local districts should be required to adopt and to implement student and system standards." And where consistent "failure occurs, the state must assume temporary control of the district's programs." This means state standards for "core requirements" and "acceptable educational results" for achievement, employability, etc.; new intermediate and local district responsibilities; development of a K-12 plan containing required course work and better teacher training.

It is estimated that more than 50% of the school districts fail to meet standards of quality needed in course content and instruction.

The goals of the Property Tax/School Finance Reform Subcommittee included cutting school operating property taxes by approximately 50%, which is about \$1.6 billion. These lost revenues would have to be replaced from some other tax source, such as increasing the sales tax and/or extending it to services. Income taxes could be increased or present exemptions on property taxes, sales taxes and others could be eliminated. The adoption of a statewide uniform school operating millage rate would equalize school revenues. Many districts have low school taxes due to very large valuations from utility generating plants, industrial plants, commercial property, etc.

---

*It is estimated that more than 50% of the school districts fail to meet standards of quality needed in course content and instruction.*

---

School finance and tax reform is very complex primarily due to Michigan's very restrictive Constitution. The very tentative committee finance recommendations include:

- Cut the school operating property tax by an average of nearly 40% by limiting it to 18 mills on residential and agricultural property. Four extra voted mills would be allowed.
- School operating taxes for industrial, commercial and utility property would be limited to 23 mills and collected statewide. Revenues would be put in the state school formula fund.
- The present 50 mill constitutional limit on all property taxes would be cut to 38 mills to prevent raising property taxes for other purposes.

The above cuts would eliminate about \$1.3 billion in school operating property taxes which would have to be replaced from some other tax source.

*(continued on page 21)*

## Water Quality Concerns

**M**ichigan farmers face many dilemmas, not the least of which is protecting water quality. The issue of water quality is very much a public policy concern as evidenced by the recent work of the Michigan Department of Agriculture Animal Waste Resource Committee and related discussions in the Michigan Legislature.

The Department of Natural Resources is charged with protecting ground water quality with authority for the department to issue ground water discharge permits granted by Public Act 245 of 1929. The act states that a person shall not discharge any waste to the waters of the state unless the individual has a permit from the DNR Water Resources Commission (WRC). The act also prohibits any discharge which is, or may become, injurious to the public health, safety, or welfare. This mandate is carried out through the WRC.

In addition, the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administers the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit program. This federal permit program was established in 1977 as part of the federal Clean Water Act. The rules promulgated by the EPA define certain livestock production facilities as point sources of waste water discharge, and require these facilities to obtain a discharge permit. The rules apply to agricultural operations with more than 1,000 animal units or which are discharging into the waters of the state or nation.

Until the summer of 1987, agricultural discharges were not a major area of concern to the DNR or the WRC. However, following substantial citizen complaint and lengthy testimony by individuals and groups, the WRC has begun to issue discharge permits to agricultural operations.

Study of the water quality issue, relative to agricultural operations, is being conducted by members of the MDA Animal Waste Resource Committee who represent various interested groups, and disciplines. The committee has drafted a set of recommendations which deserve serious consideration. Particularly, recommendations intended to clarify and strengthen the Right to Farm Act and which more clearly define the agriculture exemption under the Air Pollution Control Act should be carefully considered.

Farm and rural residents must cooperate in the development of a set of realistic standards and rules affecting air and water quality which both groups can understand, accept, and support, and which are economically feasible. Because there is considerable concern over these issues in the public policy sector, agriculture must take the lead in developing water testing programs and management techniques to ensure the public of an adequate supply of clean water.

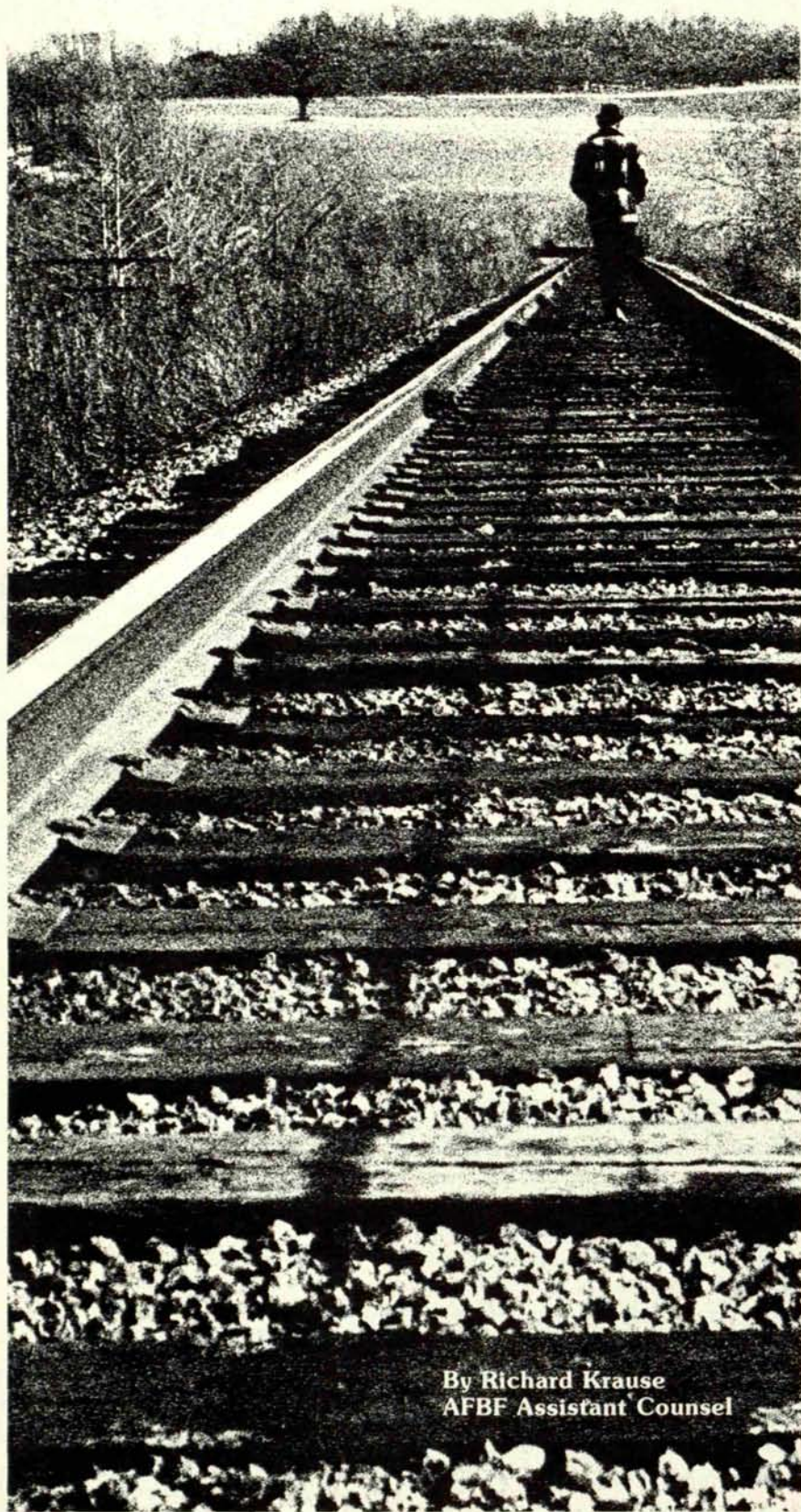
An underlying consideration will be the question of how costs for maintaining or improving water quality will be paid, and by whom.

Changes to the current state and federal permit program can be made, but first these laws must be evaluated as to their reasonableness in protecting both citizens and water quality.

Through the public hearing process, Michigan farmers have an opportunity to evaluate current law, to analyze the recommendations of the MDA committee, and play an important role in developing recommendations that will create an economic and environmental climate acceptable to all citizens.

A series of discussion sessions on the MDA committee recommendations will be held. The locations and tentative dates are as follows: Plainwell, Dec. 8; Manchester, Dec. 9; St. Johns, Dec. 10; Marlette, Dec. 15; Lake City, Dec. 16; and Escanaba, Dec. 17. □

# Rails-to-Trails



By Richard Krause  
AFBF Assistant Counsel

Since the turn of the century, the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad has slowly wound its way throughout some of the most scenic and historic countryside in central Missouri. So when the M-K-T decided to abandon a 200-mile stretch along the Missouri River, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources proposed buying the abandoned right-of-way from the railroad and converting it to a recreational "hiking and biking" trail.

But the farmers whose land abuts the rail line discovered that they, too, had an interest in this matter. They actually own the underlying title to the property constituting the right-of-way. Searching courthouse records, these farmers learned that their forefathers had granted the M-K-T only a right to use the right-of-way "for a railroad, and for no other purposes."

Because the land is no longer being used for a railroad, the farmers claim, Missouri law provides that full use of the right-of-way should revert to them. And if the abandoned line were to be converted to a recreational trail, then they — not the railroad — should be compensated for the conversion.

Led by the Missouri Farm Bureau Federation, this group of farmers filed suit to determine their rights in the abandoned right-of-way. That lawsuit is pending in federal court in St. Louis.

Similar scenes are being played all over the country, particularly in the Midwest and Pacific Northwest. Feeding on the perceived public interest in fitness and recreation, there is a demand for more recreational trails where people can hike, bike, or jog. And what better facilities than an abandoned railroad right-of-way which gives a ready-made corridor that could easily be converted to a trail. With an increasing number of rail lines being abandoned every year, there is a ready supply of such corridors.

## Grand Plan for Michigan

A national organization, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, was established through the efforts of the National Wildlife Federation and others to foster and promote trail development. It has branches in several states. One of the more grandiose trail plans is a 1,000 mile trail around the state of Michigan and through its



Upper Peninsula, largely using abandoned railroad rights-of-way.

Any property interests of the abutting landowners in these rights-of-way have been both ignored and trampled by their respective lawmakers. In the wake of state supreme court decisions in Iowa and Wisconsin (and later in Illinois and Washington) that returns abandoned rights-of-way to the lawful owners, Congress amended the National Trails System Act to provide that use of a right-of-way for a recreational trail is not considered an abandonment "for railroad purposes." According to the Interstate Commerce Commission "the main purpose of the amendment is to remove reversion as an obstacle" to trail conversion. The Missouri suit directly challenges the constitutionality of this 1983 amendment.

Most of the property underlying railroad rights-of-way in the United States is owned by the abutting landowners. As in Missouri, the former owners in most cases merely granted the railroad an "easement" (right-of-way) across the property. Most of these grants are in writing, and spell out the uses that the railroad can make of the easement. These documents should be on file in the same place where deeds are recorded.

Adjoining landowners have a direct interest in the conversion of abandoned rights-of-way to recreational trails. In most cases, conversion without their involvement will directly and adversely affect their property rights. All too often the landowners are unaware of these property rights, and they assume that the railroad owns the land. In many cases, this is simply not true.

The American Farm Bureau Federation does not oppose trail development per se, according to President Dean Kleckner. "We do, however, advocate that no rights-of-way be converted to trail use without the consent of the owner of the land underlying the easement."

A determination of property rights is most likely to depend on the specific language of the right-of-way grant and the state law regarding easements. If faced with this situation, landowners may want to consult an attorney to find out what their property rights are. □

## Rail Trails on MFB's Policy Agenda

**I**n a 1986 report, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources outlined its plans for the acquisition of railroad rights-of-way for the 1,000 mile state trails system referred to by AFBF Assistant Counsel Richard Krause. Private landowners who exercise reversionary rights were identified as a major constraint to the plan.

The answer to overcoming that constraint, the report concluded, was to develop and implement legislation "that will override reversionary rights and maintain right-of-way integrity when in the best interest of the public."

At last year's MFB annual meeting, voting delegates adopted policy regarding abandoned rights-of-way. "Abandoned rights-of-way should be left intact until such time as it is assured that they will not be used for rail transportation," they said. "In the event of disposal, adjacent property owners should have first option."

The policy also states that "when a government agency assumes responsibility for the right-of-way, we support and encourage them to use any and all means to protect the rights of adjacent property owners."

Legislation supported by this policy was introduced on May 20 by Sens. Cropsey, Welborn, Smith, Gast, Carl, Barcia, Dillingham and Schwarz. The bill (S.B. 299) was referred to the Committee on Energy. When the Senate reconvenes this fall, hearings on the proposed legislation will be held.

Here in Michigan, the "Rail Trails" issue surfaced as a local concern in various parts of the state. Benzie, Oceana, Jackson and Kalamazoo county FB leaders have been involved in rights-of-way controversies in their respective areas.

Because of the growing concern, "Rail Trails" has been placed on the MFB Probable Issues agenda, which means it will be a topic of discussion at district policy development meetings. Counties impacted by Michigan's Rail Trails plan will likely address the issue at county annuals. Because it's one of those issues that can't be easily categorized as county, state, or national, Rail Trails could well be addressed by delegates to the MFB annual meeting in December.

Current AFBF policy specifically opposes provisions of the National Trails Act which permits abandoned rail property to be donated and/or used for nature trails or other recreational purposes. So there's a pretty good chance that Rail Trails will be discussed at the national annual meeting as well.

"There are legitimate concerns about theft," said MFB Local Affairs Specialist Becky Jeppesen. "A hiker might think it perfectly harmless to grab a couple apples off a tree, or a handful of asparagus from a field. But when you multiply a couple apples by the thousands of hikers that will be using the trails, that can mean quite a loss to a producer."

"There's also a concern about liability. The application of chemicals is vital to agriculture. In many commodities, timing is critical and so farmers usually spray in the early morning when there is little wind. People like to walk the trails in early morning and there is concern by farmers that hikers might wander into sprayed fields."

"There's also the question of what rights and/or responsibilities the farmer would have in moving equipment across the trail to reach another part of his farm," she said.

"On the other hand, there are some positive aspects to the Rail Trails. It opens some new opportunities for added income for farmers through roadside produce stands, bed and breakfast enterprises in farm homes, and farm tours. It certainly falls into the development of ag tourism, which Farm Bureau supports."

FB members will be weighing these and other Rail Trails pros and cons during the policy development process in the next several months. □

# Parching Drought Dries Up Harvest Hopes

**H**ot, dry days from June to August have taken their toll on fields of corn, alfalfa, beans and sugar beets in the band of mid-Michigan counties that needed a comeback harvest the most. Farmers in Tuscola, Sanilac, Lapeer, Shiawassee, Clinton, Gratiot and Huron counties pulled through the disastrous floods of 1986 to farm again, but according to Huron County Extension agent Jim LeCureaux, 60%-70% of his county is severely affected by the summer drought. Crop damage in the region ranges

from 25% loss to as much as 70%.

"The corn is burning up on the bottom," reported LeCureaux. "We've got bean plants breaking off at the ground level because the plants are so brittle. Those (farmers) that took off a second cutting of hay got maybe four or five bales per acre. It's just generally depressing."

Faced with fields of corn that are not going to make enough grain to harvest, farmers in the area have been advised to take weekly moisture samplings until the dry matter in the stalk reaches 30%; only then can

they think about chopping for silage. Corn chopped too soon is not going to be in silo properly and nutrients will seep out, advises MSU agronomist Oran Hesterman.

He also warned farmers about the dangers of nitrate toxicity in drought stressed corn fed as green chop. "Nitrates can accumulate in the lower portion of the plant in a drought situation. Once it is made into silage that nitrate problem goes away."

Hesterman anticipated farmers' concerns about the nutrient value of  
*(continued on page 21)*

*MSU agronomist Oran Hesterman advised farmers to take weekly moisture samplings to determine when the corn has reached 30% dry matter.*



# Canadian Trade Tour Creates Better Understanding

By Donna Wilber

**M**ichigan Farm Bureau President Jack Laurie and a group of other state presidents returned home from a trade mission to Canada in July with no promises of a free trade agreement, but confident that their visits with farmers and negotiators had created a better understanding between the two agricultures that share a common border. The Canadian trip was the third in a series of trade excursions conducted by AFBF this year to ensure that the voice of production agriculture is heard in current multi-lateral and bilateral trade discussions.

"AFBF has made many trade trips over the years, but this is the first to Canada," Laurie said. "It's almost a natural because they're our neighbors and we're major competitors in a lot of areas. But we've never really sat down with the Canadians and talked about some of the concerns we ought to be addressing as farmers. This was an opportunity to do that."

One of their visits was with representatives of the Union of Production Agriculture (UPA) in Montreal, Canada's counterpart to FB.

"They talked about their production control programs and the impact of our farm policies on their agriculture," Laurie said. "We talked about the impact of the tariff on corn and how they plan to be self-sufficient in corn this year. Later I read an article that four of Canada's largest corn processors are lobbying their government to stop the tariff because two of them may close and the other two are buying tariff-priced corn, processing it and shipping it back to the U.S. That's not doing much for the Canadian economy. That was an indication to me that their people aren't as happy with the tariff as might have been indicated at first."

"We had an opportunity to explain our '85 Farm Bill and how the price support program ratchets down to make us more competitive. We explained to them that 50 percent of our agriculture is not covered by a subsidy type program," he said. "They were not aware of some of these things."

The FB delegation traveled to Prince Edward Island where they visited with potato growers and members of their marketing board.

"A large majority of their potatoes come into the U.S. east coast market. There are some freight subsidies which make that a profitable market for them," Laurie said. "They don't want production controls on potatoes. With the indirect subsidies they have, such as transportation and a property tax relief program on farmland, they're highly competitive in the marketplace."



*MFB President Jack Laurie reports that Canadian trade negotiators recognize that the Common Market policies have created worldwide trade problems.*

In meetings with the Canadian wheat marketing board in Ottawa, members were very critical of the U.S. export incentive program (BICEP), Laurie reports.

"They said it was a dumb move! That indicated to me that it's effective. We told them that Congress, taxpayers and farmers stand behind the program and that we intended not to change that. They weren't happy to hear that. I had the feeling that they thought if they had an opportunity to talk to farmers, they could convince us that it was a bad program. It didn't work," he said.

The position of the Canadian trade negotiators, Laurie said, was "pretty concrete. They said they plan to protect the Canadian farmer from what they called 'an aggressive U.S. subsidy program.'"

"The trade negotiators indicated that they really understood what the worldwide problem is — the European Common Market. The Canadians realize that we need to do some things between our two countries that allow us both to be more competitive with the Europeans," he said.

"There is a lot of commonality between Canada and the U.S. and the bulk of the trade between us goes unrestricted. All we hear about are those areas where we have restrictions and tariffs, but a vast majority is unrestricted and we want to keep it that way. There's no reason that it can't all be that way."

Laurie believes that the FB trade mission to Canada was worthwhile.

"I think our visits left a better understanding that we are positioned, as two countries with their common border as long as it is, to really impact worldwide agriculture. I can't help but feel that it helped the trade negotiators who are sitting on Canada's side of the table to hear the positions of U.S. producers from producers — not just from a bureaucrat negotiator sitting on the other side of the table. It gives credibility to what our negotiators are saying. If we accomplished that — and I think we did — then the trip was certainly worthwhile," he concluded. □

**Hawaii**  
Wow! What An  
Incentive!



## The 1987 Discussion Meet Contest You Could Be A Winner!

**A free 10 day trip to the sandy shores of Hawaii awaits this year's Young Farmer State Discussion Meet Winner.**

Your district contest is just around the corner! Don't wait, contact your county Farm Bureau secretary for the name of your Young Farmer chairperson and get ready for the fun!

**This year's Discussion Meet topics are:**

- How do the freedoms of today's agriculture compare with the freedoms the founding fathers envisioned as they wrote the Constitution over 200 years ago?
- Should underdeveloped countries receive U.S. aid to help establish their agricultural economics?
- What can farmers and ranchers do along with Farm Bureau to protect our nation's groundwater resources to guarantee a safe and abundant supply of water?
- How does agriculture benefit from futures trading?

Go with the  
**WINNER!!**

to Waikiki - Kauai - Kona

**Hawaii**

**MARCH 2-12, 1988**



**INCLUDES:**

Roundtrip air from Lansing, Grand Rapids or Detroit

4 nights Waikiki—Sheraton Moana Hotel

2 nights Kauai—Sheraton Coconut Beach Hotel

3 nights Kona—Hotel King Kamehameha

Traditional flower Lei Greeting

All airport to hotel transfers

All taxes and portorage

City tour of Honolulu and Arizona Memorial

Circle Island Tour on Oahu with a stop at a Pineapple Field

Wailau River and Fern Grotto Cruise on Kauai

Visit an Orchid Nursery

Volcano National Park Tour

Visit to Parker Ranch with lunch included

**Limited Availability  
Make Reservations Soon**

**\$1485**

**PER PERSON  
SHARING DOUBLE**

This group tour offered exclusively  
to Farm Bureau members.

**Call TOLL FREE**

**1-800-331-1729**

**In Grand Rapids**

**616-452-9556**

**Use Farm Bureau Travel Service for  
convenience and savings on all of  
your business and personal travel.**

Please rush me the full-color information brochure describing the  
FARM BUREAU GROUP HAWAII TOUR.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/ Town \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

MFB Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Farm Bureau Travel Service, 2421 Eastern Avenue,  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49507.

**Farm Bureau Travel Service**

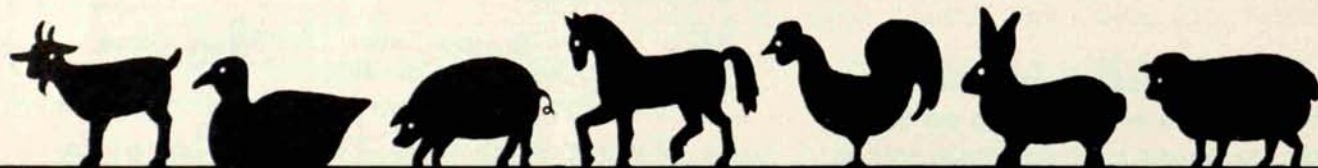
# Country Almanac

## September

- Sept. County Farm Bureau Annual Meetings. See page 5 for listing.
- Sept. 1 Dist. 1 PD Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Holiday Inn West, Kalamazoo.
- Sept. 1-5 Chelsea Community Fair, Chelsea.
- Sept. 1-7 Chippewa County Fair, Kinross.
- Sept. 2 Manistee Co. Ag Fair, Onekama.
- Sept. 3-7 Dickinson County Fair, Norway.
- Sept. 4 Dist. 6 Young Farmer District Discussion Meet, 7 p.m., Fritz's Family Restaurant, Richville.
- Sept. 5-7 Michigan Peach Festival, Romeo.
- Sept. 8 AgriCom/AgriVisor Commodity Outlook Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Aldrich's Restaurant, Frankenmuth.  
Dist. 2 Young Farmer District Discussion Meet, 7 p.m., Carriage House Restaurant, Hillsdale.
- Sept. 8-12 Saline Community Fair, Saline.
- Sept. 9 AgriCom/AgriVisor Commodity Outlook Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Holiday Inn, Jackson.  
Dist. 1 Young Farmer District Discussion Meet, 7:30 p.m., Kulesia's Restaurant, Vandalia.
- Sept. 10 District 5 PD Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Farm Bureau Center, Lansing.
- Sept. 10-12 Chippewa County Stalwart Ag Fair, Stalwart.  
Logging Conference, Marquette.
- Sept. 11 Dist. 8 Young Farmer District Discussion Meet, Heritage House, Chesaning.
- Sept. 11-13 Luce-West Mackinac County Fair, Newberry.  
Mackinac County Fair, Allenville.  
Presque Isle Co. 4-H Fair, Posen.
- Sept. 11-19 Allegan County Fair, Allegan.
- Sept. 12-19 Saginaw County Ag Fair, Saginaw.
- Sept. 15 Ag in the Classroom Conf., 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Park Inn, Mt. Pleasant.
- Sept. 16-25 MACMA Frozen Fruit Express Sale Deliveries.
- Sept. 17-19 Marquette County Harvest Festival, Marquette.
- Sept. 19 Dist. 5 Young Farmer District Discussion Meet.
- Sept. 20-26 St. Joseph Co. Fair, Centreville.
- Sept. 21-22 Michigan Ag/Tourism Conference, Lake Michigan College, Benton Harbor.
- Sept. 22 Dist. 9 Young Farmer District Discussion Meet, 6:30 p.m., Holiday Inn, Traverse City.
- Sept. 23 MFB State PD Committee Mtg., FB Center, Lansing.
- Sept. 27-Oct. 3 Hillsdale County Ag Fair, Hillsdale.

### Coming Up

- Oct. 1 Star Award Entry Forms due at Farm Bureau Center.
- Oct. 9 Dist. 10 Young Farmer District Discussion Meet, 7 p.m., Hidden Valley Resort, Gaylord.



## “Caring for Callie” Brings the Farm to the City

**E**arly this spring, the *Grand Rapids Press* bought a Holstein named Callie for their readers. On the first Sunday of each month, reporter Kathy Longcore gives her audience a glimpse of farming as a business and as a way of life from the John Finkbeiner farm near Caledonia where Callie lives. The special series, called “Caring for Callie — Dairy Farming in the 80s,” will run through the end of the year.

When Callie moved from the dairy barn to the maternity barn, both rural and urban readers waited in anticipation for the birth of her “baby.” Kathy and *Press* photographer Anna Moore Butzner, recorded that exciting event for Callie’s growing ranks of fans.

That moment came on June 14 at 3 p.m. The baby calf became the focal point for the involved readers and the 650 west Michigan children who took part in a contest to name her.

Kathy recorded her impressions of the newborn calf in a *Press* story following its birth:

*The calf, only an hour old, curled on the straw-covered barn floor. Callie, its mother, leaned over and with her huge tongue lifted the newborn heifer’s wet head. Then, like a limp rag doll, the head flopped down again.*

### FARMETTE

By Andrea Hofmeister



*Flies buzzed.*

*The Sunday afternoon was sultry, unusually so for mid-June. But there was a breeze coming through the south door of the century-old barn at Twin Pines Farms in Caledonia. And that’s where Callie quietly, naturally had given birth.*

*Calving is common at the farm owned by the Finkbeiner family. Ten newborns appear each month on the average.*

*But, birth is like sunrise. No matter how often it happens, its magic doesn’t wear off, even for Rob Finkbeiner, a veteran of more than 40 years as a dairy farmer. He paused from his afternoon chores to stand at the maternity barn gate, grinning as he watched the leggy, 85-pound creature.*

*“She’s a nice looking calf,” he said, his dairyman’s eye appraising her Holstein conformation and coloring.*

*The calf dried quickly in the 90-degree heat, and by the time Callie nudged her to her feet, her spanking clean coat was black and white velvet.*

“Gentle Jenny,” the name submitted by 9-year-old Angie Fisk of Pierston, was picked over such entries as Milkshake, Oreo, Moo-donna and Callie’s Comet. Angie won a trip with her family to the Finkbeiners’ Twin Pines Farms, a dinner at Sam’s Joint in Caledonia, and five gallons of her favorite ice cream.

MFB President and dairy farmer Jack Laurie sent a letter to *Grand Rapids Press* Editor Mike Lloyd, expressing his appreciation of the “Caring for Callie” series and for “providing an outstanding service to our industry by opening the ‘farm gate’ of understanding for your urban audience.

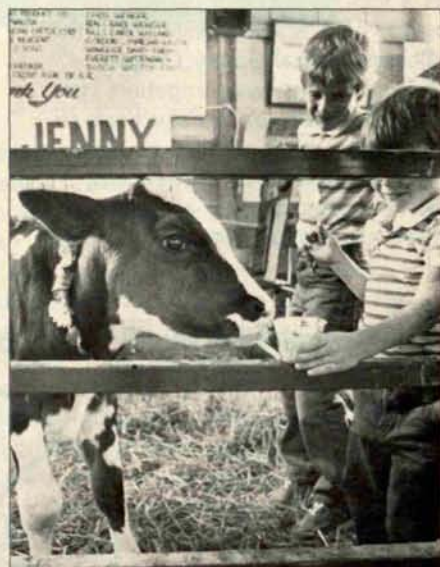
“We have long admired Kathy Longcore’s abilities as a journalist. Her sensitivity, objectivity, constant quest for knowledge, and creativity in sharing what she learns with her

readers, has made her one of the most respected agricultural writers in our state. She and your talented photographer, Anna Moore, have brought the story of Callie to thousands of people who otherwise might still associate their cartons of milk with the local supermarket instead of the farm.

“We farmers are a very small minority of the population, less than three percent, and decisions are made every day that impact our industry by those who are generations away from their farm roots. That’s why the understanding of, and appreciation for, our industry by the other 97 percent is so important to us. You have helped us gain that understanding and appreciation, and we thank you!”

Kathy Longcore was MFB’s “Agricultural Communicator of the Year” in 1983 and a runner-up in the annual news media recognition program in 1984. □

### RURAL RASCALS



*Gentle Jenny checks out the ice cream offered to her by Jacob Finkbeiner and his brother Josh at the Kent County Youth Fair in Lowell. (Photo by Anna Moore Butzner, Grand Rapids Press)*

# Use ATVs Safely for Work or Play

**C**ousins of dirt bikes and snowmobiles, sales of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) have skyrocketed in the past six years, with an estimated five million riders nationally. During that same time, a substantial number of ATVs have been purchased by farmers for use in their daily operations.

As the popularity of the vehicles has increased, concerns about their safety have also grown. The Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) injury statistics have indicated a dramatic increase in injuries and deaths associated with ATVs during the 1982-85 period and a continued high number of injuries and deaths in 1986.

However, fewer farm-related accidents have occurred compared to non-farm accidents. That's due to how the vehicles are used in the agricultural community, according to Ron Converse, manager of FBIG's Products, Risk and Loss Control Department.

"The farm community uses ATVs as a tool, not as a toy," said Converse, who is also president of the Michigan Rural Safety Council. "Farmers who have irrigation systems use them on a daily basis to check lines and monitor pumps. Additionally, livestock farmers use ATVs to check cattle and fences and there are many other on-farm uses.

"Farm Bureau Insurance Group has not seen a real serious ATV accident on the farm in some time, basically because the agricultural sector views them as a piece of equipment, which is not always the case in urban areas," Converse said. "FBIG has had some claims, but nothing out of the ordinary. We feel that we've been very fortunate considering the number of ATVs that are used on farms."

ATV critics are becoming more vocal in their protests against the vehicles, but according to Converse, there is another side to the story.

"I can see where people are coming from when ATVs are used for toys, but when they are used as a labor saving tool, then it's a whole different ball game. There are some farmers who have slight handicaps, such as arthritis, and ATVs can make life a whole lot easier for them," he said.

"I think part of the misuse of the vehicles can be attributed to advertisements which show riders jumping rocks or streams. That is not what they are used for in the agricultural community."

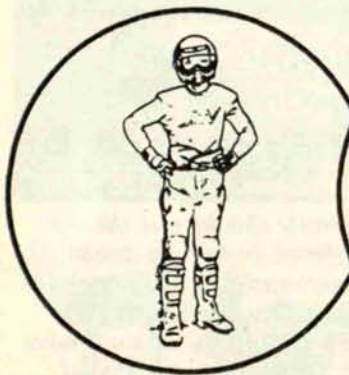
Studies have shown that rider misuse and/or disregard of common sense warnings are major factors in ATV accidents. Cited were riding double on vehicles intended for single rider use, riding while under

the influence of alcohol, children operating ATVs without parental supervision and riding on paved surfaces. Converse pointed out that it is illegal to operate an ATV on Michigan roads.

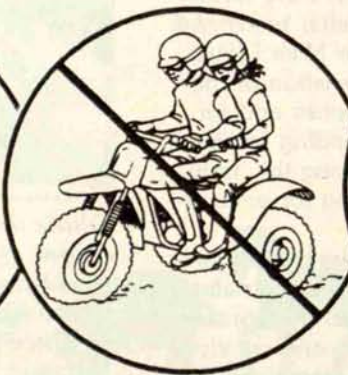
The Consumer Product Safety Commission offers the following advice for ATV owner/operators:

- ATVs are not toys; children under 12 years should not operate any ATV.
  - Take a training course. Inexperienced drivers in their first month of using an ATV have 13 times the average risk of injury.
  - No passengers! ATVs are designed for one driver and no passengers.
  - Four-wheelers are more stable than three-wheelers. Most ATV manufacturers are now producing only four-wheelers.
  - Don't let children under 16 ride adult-size ATVs (greater than 90 cc).
  - Helmets save lives. Helmets could have saved the lives of approximately 25% of the people who died from head injuries in ATV accidents.
  - Do not operate an ATV on public roads or while under the influence of alcohol.
  - Fully-suspended ATVs handle better. CPSC engineering tests show that the handling of a fully-suspended ATV is significantly better
- (continued on page 21)*

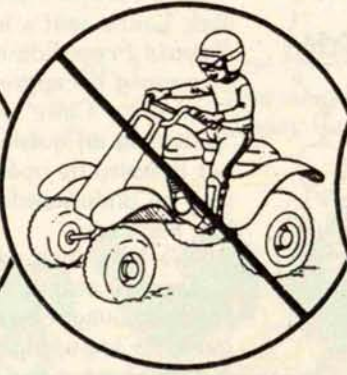
**Helmets save lives.**



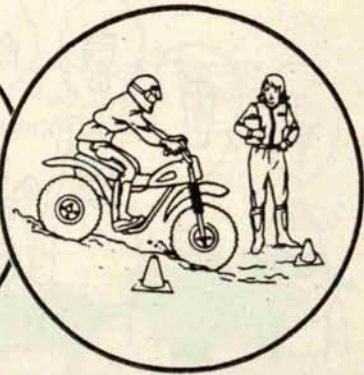
**No passengers!**



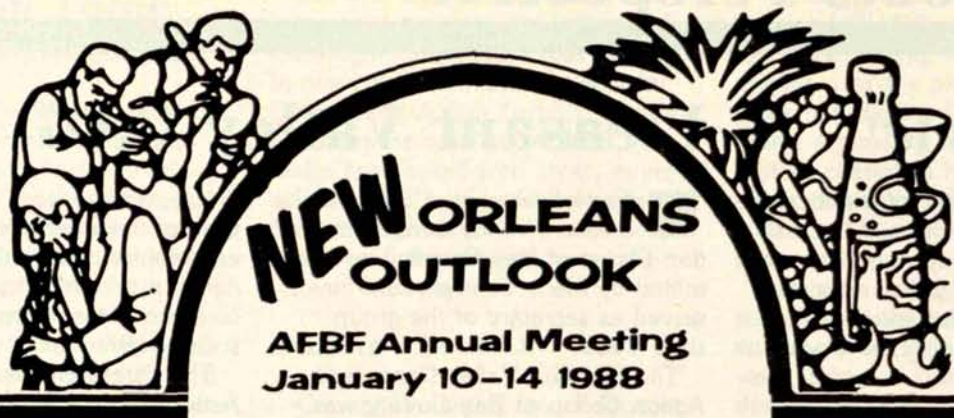
**ATVs are not toys.**



**Take a training course.**

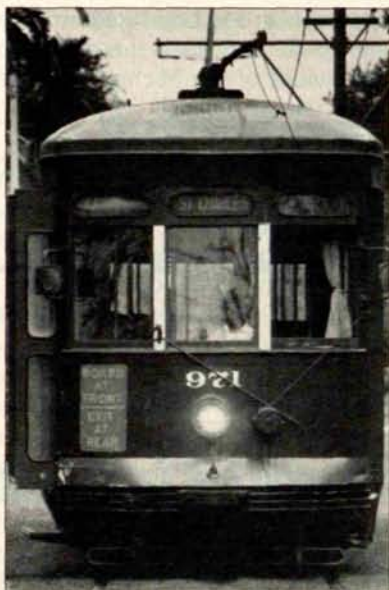






# NEW ORLEANS OUTLOOK

AFBF Annual Meeting  
January 10-14 1988



**N**ew Orleans, site of the 69th American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting, Jan. 10-14, 1988, is one of the world's unique cities.

Founded in 1718 by Jean Baptiste LeMoynes, Sieur de Bienville, New Orleans became the capital of French Louisiana in 1723. The Spanish succeeded the French some forty years later, and New Orleans became an American city with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803.

Today, New Orleans has not forgotten her European heritage, nor has she abandoned the flavor of the Old South. The French Quarter retains its old world charm, while antebellum splendor lingers on in the Garden District.

Of course, there's New Orleans' well known night life, punctuated by the infectious beat of all that jazz, jazz, jazz. Dixieland, rhythm and blues, and Cajun music pour out of the jazz clubs, the sounds blending to flood the city's side streets.

And New Orleans' cuisine is incomparable. From internationally

renowned fine restaurants to stylish cafes to street corner oyster bars, you'll find a savory dish for every day and every mood.

Join your fellow Michigan Farm Bureau members in New Orleans for the 69th AFBF Annual Meeting and become a part of the excitement and fun that is New Orleans!

FB is sparing no effort to put together an entertaining and informative program to attract the maximum number of farmer members from across the nation.

*(continued on page 22)*

## "You Said It"

Here are just a few of the local, state and national topics that Community Action Group members submitted as probable policy development issues after discussion of the July topic "MFB Policy Development Process:"

### Local Issues

- Limit herbicide spraying (brush control) to no more than 25 ft. from the center of the road.
- Road and bridge improvement
- Rural land use
- Wildlife and deer damage

### State Issues

- School financing and teacher certification requirements
- Property tax
- Livestock odors
- Water quality

### National Issues

- Continuation of the farm bill
- Tax reforms
- Marketing orders
- Agricultural credit

### In October

#### Farmowners Insurance Program (tentative)

*This topic, developed in cooperation with Farm Bureau Insurance Group, will ask members to discuss the heart of FBIG's product service to farmers: Farmowners Insurance. The topic will cover current research findings, summarize the results of the Farmowners pilot project and solicit responses to program concepts and long range ideas and recommendations.*

#### Discussion Leaders:

*Community Action Group video discussion tapes will be available at county FB offices beginning this month.*

## Pleasant Valley CAG

■ The following brief history of the Pleasant Valley Community Action Group of Bay County was submitted by Marie Schwab, who has served as secretary of the group since 1953:

The Pleasant Valley Community Action Group of Bay County was organized in 1950. Alfred Sivier, former director on the Bay County FB Board of Directors, acted as chairperson at the organization meeting. He explained the purpose and activities of the Michigan Farm Bureau. Hugo Schwab, Herbert Peppel and Alfred Wegener comprised the first slate of officers. Their families are still members of the Pleasant Valley group.

Since the group began meeting, the discussions of agricultural problems and FB policy to address those

problems have been the main purpose of the meetings. Some of the early topics dealt with farm mineral rights, the Horton trespass law, sales taxes on personal property and the social security tax.

The Pleasant Valley Community Action Group has always been active in legislative activities and "get out the vote" efforts at election time.

Marie Schwab has been secretary for the group since 1953 and has threatened to quit "if the group doesn't buy her a steak dinner for the services rendered."

Current active members are: Marie Schwab, Ellen Peppel, Alex and Jeanette Zawacki, Devere and Beatrice Burtch, Jack and Jean Bartlett, and James and Marie Revard. □

### Discussion Topic

## Promotion and Education

■ FB members looking for a "hands on" opportunity to promote their industry, create linkages between tourism and agriculture, and build bridges of understanding to the non-farm public are talking about the newest statewide committee network in the Michigan Farm Bureau — the Promotion and Education Committee.

Although the acronym "P&E" is already being commonly used, let's focus on the formal committee name as we discuss the types of program goals and project ideas.

Through the involvement of FB men and women, positive experiences can be planned which educate non-farm neighbors about agriculture. For example, classroom visits by farmers and follow-up farm tours give school age children accurate information about how food is produced. After a visit to a dairy farm, there will be little question of whether milk comes from the cow or the corner grocery.

Working with young people can be fun, but county Promotion and Education Committees may recognize the need to inform and educate adults about agriculture to avoid misunderstandings between farm and non-farm neighbors in agricultural/residential areas. Non-farm neighbors often have little background in agriculture and do not realize that animal odors, tractor noise, and crop protection sprays are a natural part of farming and rural living.

In other areas of Michigan, promotion activities can be instrumental in boosting the local economy through developing bonds between agriculture and tourist related businesses.

### Reaching the Non-Farm Majority

Promotion and education programs can achieve both short term and long term goals for agricultural (continued on next page)

## Discussion Topic

(continued from previous page)

understanding. The long term value of sharing agricultural experiences becomes apparent when you consider that people growing up today have fewer personal experiences with agriculture and farming. Without accurate information about your industry, these current and future voters cannot make wise decisions about agriculture at election time. It is the goal of Promotion and Education Committees to help people experience, learn about and understand why agriculture is so important to them and to the economy.

According to MFB policy established at the 1986 annual meeting, the committees are responsible for developing and carrying out projects and programs for all the members and various age groups of MFB. Such projects and programs are to include, but not be limited to: health and safety, leadership training, agriculture in the classroom, current issues, commodity promotions, and consumer education.

In this case, promotion means to foster a positive awareness of FB and agriculture, and build an understanding of their value to members, consumers, and to the country.

Educational projects should provide opportunities and experiences for FB members and selected non-members (students, consumers, potential members, and others) to learn more about FB and agriculture.

### Speaking Out for Agriculture

An activity that county Promotion and Education Committees may initiate in their area is an FB Speakers Bureau. Through the speakers bureau, local agriculture leaders can share insights on farming with members of local service clubs and community organizations.

A FB welcome wagon program has also been suggested to offer farmers the opportunity to greet new, non-farm neighbors, provide information about local farm practices and help them understand local agriculture.

Community Action Groups can be key participants on Promotion and Education Committees and projects. In this golden anniversary year for Community Action Groups, it is time for the grassroots voice of FB to make itself heard with ideas, energy, and effort to help tackle projects that promote agriculture and help people understand the importance of the farming industry.

### Building a Network

County Promotion and Education Committees are scheduled to be appointed by September 1. County committees will assess what their local specific needs are and select projects that will address those needs.

---

*After a visit to a dairy farm there is little question of whether milk comes from the cow or corner grocery.*

---

Each committee member will be asked to take the leadership for at least one project. In addition, the committee member will recruit others to serve as ad hoc committee members. Together they will form a project team to accomplish the project goals. Ad hoc committee members can be recruited from among county FB committee members, retired or inactive members, Community Action Groups, friends, relatives, and acquaintances from church, school, or local clubs.

A State Promotion and Education Committee will be appointed Sept. 1. These committee members are now working to develop a program of work that will help county committees as they take on new and exciting projects that reach out to others with the message of agriculture.

### Changing Lifestyles

The concept of a Promotion and Education Committee originated with a group of 12 women appointed in 1986 by the MFB Board of Directors to study the future of MFB Women's Committees.

Although these committees have a long and illustrious history, enrollment and activity in Women's Committees over the past five to 10 years had declined to the point where a majority of Women's Committees ceased to function. Some committees had only a few people tackle mall displays and many other projects.

A survey conducted for this 1986 study found that more women than ever were working off the farm or were taking on more farm chores than in the past. The women surveyed responded that they would like to be involved in projects to promote agriculture, but could not shoulder all the responsibilities of accomplishing projects. In addition, they expressed a desire to work with their spouses on FB projects to increase their time together.

After carefully considering the results of the survey and the potential for promotion and education programs, the study committee recommended the creation of a Promotion and Education Committee so all members could become involved in such projects. To help integrate men and women into this and other committees, it was recommended that the Women's Committee be dissolved on Dec. 1, 1987.

At the 1986 MFB Annual Meeting, the delegates voted to accept the recommendations of the study committee. Since December 1986, MFB and county FBs have been in the process of establishing the first FB Promotion and Education Committees in the United States. □

### Discussion Questions

- What local or county needs could be addressed by people working on P&E Committees?
- What projects could be done to fulfill those needs?
- How can your Community Action Group contribute to the P&E Committee or P&E projects?

## Using USDA Commodity Reports

■ While bad-mouthing USDA crop production and stock reports, or their counterparts for livestock, has become an art form for some producers, it's important to remember that benefitting farmers and ranchers is one of the main purposes behind the regularly released statistics.

Those producers who have approached their farming or ranching operations as a business have taken advantage of the USDA reports to assist them in making production decisions and in determining their marketing strategies.

"The idea behind the various reports from USDA is that these reports give the best available projections of supply and demand which in turn provide farmers/ranchers the opportunity to do a better job of marketing their products for the highest price," said Dean Brown, director of the AFBF feed grains, soybeans and wheat department.

Rich Allen, chairperson of the Agricultural Statistics Board, the entity responsible for releasing the various USDA reports on production, stocks, etc., explained that "for agriculture to function best, farmers, exporters, traders and policy makers need the best information of what the supply is. Our role is to provide unbiased information.

"What we are trying to do is provide information to everybody at the same time, relative to the total production level and the total supply level."

Much like the farmer who hears a consumer say, "we don't need farmers because we get our food from the local grocery store," Allen says that he's heard comments from producers, questioning why are USDA reports needed since they get the information from market advisors and other sources.

"What these farmers don't realize is that much of this information from 'other sources,' is based on information from USDA reports," he pointed out.

In many instances, the information that reaches the individual producer from analysts, also includes an explanation of what the statistics mean.

### The Reports To Watch

The official 1987 Agricultural Statistics Board calendar schedule highlights some 165 days for USDA releases. On occasion, several different commodity reports are released on the same day.

Of the reports issued by USDA, Allen considers the major grain stocks reports to be the early June stocks report for wheat, and the early September stocks report for corn and soybeans. The reason behind their importance is that each includes the carry-out (beginning stocks minus depletions).

Other important releases are those which cover planting intentions as well as the first forecasts of expected harvested production, i.e., in June for red tart cherry crop and various specialty crops in August.

For livestock, the major reports for producers include the December and June hog reports and the January reports for sheep and cattle.

Each of these USDA reports, as well as all the other production updates provided by USDA are provided to FB farmers and ranchers through the organization's market information system, FB ACRES/AgriCom. Also included in the FB ACRES/AgriCom data system, updated on a daily basis, is market news and insights as to what the traders in the marketplace are expecting by way of production and inventories. The FB market news service also provides information prepared by FB commodity staff people, who prepare forecasts on wheat, soybean and feed grain production.

According to Brown, these projections are intended to give producers an advanced, early-bird look at expected production. He compiles production status information from

farmer members, then using historical crop yield and production data, arrives at FB's projections. Releasing this information in advance of some of the major trade forecasters, and ahead of USDA's reports, gives FB farmers the opportunity to establish their personal marketing strategies ahead of others who are not linked to such an information source.

### The News That Moves Prices

Someone once said of agricultural commodities that "price is not established — it's discovered." While that comment was about daily trade activities at various commodity exchanges, the axiom holds true throughout agricultural commodity marketing. In any case, the flow of accurate information is a key factor in determining prices.

Operating on information that's believed to indicate what supplies are, or will be, market prices respond. An important point to remember is that in the "price discovery" operation, the real news that moves prices up or down in response to USDA reports is that which is unexpected — the difference between what the marketplace expects and the actual statistics in the USDA reports.

The information must be kept in context with what the market believes is happening. No matter how farmers are involved in the market, it's in their best interest to be aware of what the market is thinking as far as supply and demand figures.

Brown also sees this as a critical point and a real advantage for those producers connected to a market information system.

"USDA is a good source of information, for those involved in commodity trading, but not the only one. A farmer/rancher who will spend time keeping up with the day-to-day trade news, which affects supply and demand has an advantage over those who don't," Brown said. □

## Legislative Review

(continued from page 7)

- Raise the statewide sales tax from the present 4% to 6%.
- Cutting the present 50 mill total limit to 38 mills and raising the sales tax from the present 4% to 6% would require a vote at a statewide election.
- These property tax cuts only apply to school operating taxes and do not affect other local property taxes (county, township, etc.).

It is also tentatively recommended that the Legislature begin the program on education quality by establishing an Educational Trust Fund with \$209 million annually to encourage quality programs.

A third issue is educational equality, which is quite complex, but would set up a pooling arrangement from the school districts, to be phased in over a 10-year period. This part of the program would only take effect if the voters did not approve the permanent school property tax relief program.

Two other subcommittees will recommend new school distribution formulas and other quality education programs. All reports must be approved by the full commission with a final complete report by mid-September. The Legislature will consider it in the fall session. It may also run into the 1988 session. This issue should receive major attention in the 1987 Farm Bureau policy development process.

### Mobile Home Taxation —

One source of additional revenue under consideration is equalizing mobile homes with other property. The current \$3 per month fee in lieu of regular property tax has not changed in nearly 30 years. At the time, \$3 per month was considered to be equitable with other housing. Manufactured housing has changed dramatically. They are no longer "mobile homes." Less than 4% are ever moved and they now appear very similar to standard housing.

While the \$3 monthly fee has remained the same for nearly 30 years, the average tax rate has increased on other housing from 35

mills to 54 mills and valuations have increased 325%.

There are 122,489 licensed sites in so-called "mobile" home parks. It is estimated that the average value for new single-section manufactured homes is over \$17,000, a double unit is over \$30,000.

It is true that the manufactured-home owners pay taxes on the land under the homes, but the tax on the home itself is only \$36 a year. Other home owners pay taxes on the combined value of the land and housing. While Michigan has one of the lowest tax rates on these homes in the nation, the state has one of the highest tax rates on other property values. If a manufactured home is on private land, it is taxed the same as any other property.

Other states have a variety of fees or taxes. Some tax such housing the same as other real estate, some as personal property, some have fees based on the previous year's general property tax rate, or fees based on a per square foot assessment.

Bills are introduced in Michigan every year to change this situation, but seldom get very far. FB's present policy is that manufactured housing units in parks should be taxed the same as they are when on private land. □

*Lansing legislative topics are reviewed by Robert E. Smith, MFB senior legislative counsel.*

## Use ATVs Safely

(continued from page 16)

than that of front-only or tire-only suspended ATVs.

In addition, riders should strongly be alerted to watch out for collision hazards, particularly fences and cables.

ATV owner/operators who would like information on ATV safety training and video tapes can contact their local Cooperative Extension office, according to Howard Doss, Michigan State University extension safety specialist.

Converse added that if an ATV is purchased, the buyer should notify their insurance agent to make sure they have proper liability coverage. □

## Drought

(continued from page 10)

the silage from the parched corn. "If there is no grain or very little, the nutrient value of drought stressed corn is about 75% of the nutrient value of normal, well-eared corn. If there is some grain that will be harvested along with the stalk for silage that value goes up — in some cases it can be worth nearly the same as normal, well-eared corn," he said.

In all cases, the amount of grain that is going to be set on these plants was set in July or earlier. If the drought is relieved in the coming weeks, the kernels that were pollinated will expand and increase in weight. On those ears that do not show any kernels, no amount of rain will increase grain yields.

---

*"Most of our farmers only needed an average year to keep going."*

---

Hesterman was among the team of local extension personnel and MSU Extension specialists who toured Gratiot County Aug. 6. According to Van Varner, Gratiot County Extension director, "Most of our farmers needed just an average year to keep going. Where normally we would have 120 bushel corn yield... we'll end up with an average of 80 bushel per acre. Now most of them will have to sit down with their lenders and really work out a plan... It's a question of how far out on a limb the farmer and lender can go to continue some of these farming operations."

Nonetheless, Varner described the mood of farmers in the area as "still hopeful."

"After last fall, most have the attitude of taking one day at a time. We are somewhat depressed, but many of our producers are dealing with the loss. There are some problems in the country, but producers are managing their emotions and their personal lives fairly well. I think in this county they've made that adjustment where farming is no longer their total life. They're in a position to better handle the loss," Varner said. □

# HARVEST IN SEPTEMBER SALE



## Win a FREE trip to New Orleans!

### Contest Rules

1. You must be a Farm Bureau member to enter the contest.
2. You must receive a written price quote or a bill of sale for 2 Multi-Angle rear farm tractor tires plus 2 TRF tractor tires during September 1987 from a **Safemark** dealer.
3. The dealer is to send a copy of receipt or quote to the state office immediately to the attention of the Safemark Manager.
4. A Drawing will take place at the American Farm Bureau Service Company, Park Ridge, Illinois, on October 30, 1987.
5. The winner will receive up to \$1,000 towards airfare for 2 from a major city to New Orleans, and hotel costs for 3 nights during the AFBF Convention.
6. The Safemark dealer writing the winning receipt or quote wins the same award as above.
7. Offer void where prohibited by law.



**Multi-Angle R-1**  
13.6—28 4 PLY **\$135.95**  
18.4—38 8 PLY **\$364.95**

**TRF**  
6.00—16 6 PLY **\$38.95**  
10.00—16 8 PLY **\$95.95**

## New Orleans

(continued from page 17)

From the opening vesper service on Sunday, Jan. 10, 1988, through two action-packed general sessions with nationally-known speakers and spectacular entertainment, special interest conferences and the final deliberations of voting delegates as they hammer out the organization's 1988 policy resolutions, the 69th Annual AFBF Convention and Trade Show promises to be an exciting event!

Young Farmer Discussion Meet competition and the trade show, featuring exhibits by some of the nation's leading agri-businesses, will begin on Sunday, Jan. 10. General sessions are scheduled for Monday, Jan. 11, and Tuesday, Jan. 12. Famous radio/TV personality and inspirational speaker Art Linkletter is confirmed to address the assembly of FB members.

"A Cajun Country Night in Louisiana" will be the theme for the big recognition and awards program on Tuesday, Jan. 12. Stars of the evening will be Doug Kershaw and the Louise Mandrell Show.

Special interest/commodity conferences will be held on Monday and Tuesday and the official business session of the annual meeting, including adoption of policy recommendations, will be conducted on Wednesday and Thursday.

The entire MFB delegation will be housed at the New Orleans Hilton Riverside and Towers, headquarters hotel for the 1988 annual meeting. Built right on the Mississippi, the Hilton is downtown, a few short blocks from the French Quarter and right next door to the New Orleans Convention Center.

Several travel package arrangements will be made available to MFB members through the Meeting and Travel Services Department in Farm Bureau Center. Watch for AFBF/New Orleans travel offerings and reservation form in the October issue of *Rural Living* magazine. □

# Farm Bureau Market Place

## CLASSIFIED AD POLICY

- Farm Bureau members pay 25 cents per word for all classified advertisements.
- All other advertisers pay 50 cents per word for one insertion and 45 cents per word for two or more consecutive insertions of the same ad.
- All advertisements are subject to a 15-word minimum charge, including member ads.
- Please indicate if you are a Farm Bureau member.
- The deadline for ads is the first Monday of the month preceding publication.
- All ads must be pre-paid and may be pre-paid up to one year in advance.
- It is the responsibility of the advertiser to re-insert the ad on a month-by-month or year-by-year basis.
- The publisher has the right to reject any advertising copy submitted.
- No ads will be taken over the phone.

## MAIL YOUR AD WITH PAYMENT TO:

Rural Living  
P.O. Box 30960  
Lansing, Mich. 48909

## HAY LISTING

**HILLSDALE HAY, INC.:** Brian Hasty, Sales Manager, 106 S. County Line Road, Tekonsha, Mich. 49092; home phone 517-765-2099, Litchfield sales phone 517-542-3438 (Wednesdays only). All hay NIR tested. (12-1fn)

**HOWELL LIVESTOCK AUCTION:** Bill or Larry Sheridan, P.O. Box 157, Howell, Mich. 48843; office phone 517-548-3300. (12-1fn)

## FOR HOMEMAKERS

**PECANS:** Quart each halves, pieces, meal. Three-quart sampler, \$9.95. Canecreek Farm, Cookeville, TN 38502-2727. (4-7-15p-ts)

**GUARDIAN SERVICE LIDS AND PANS!** Pyrex, Corning, pressure cooker parts. Box 3392CF, Orange, CA 92665. (9-4-15p-ts)

## DOGS

**SHETLAND SHEEPDOGS:** (mini-collie) AKC registered. Wonderful as pets or on the farm. St. Johns, Mich. Lisa Betz 517-224-4029 or Alice Hicks 517-224-4515. (9-2-25p)

## LIVESTOCK

**REGISTERED ANGUS BREEDING STOCK:** For sale at all times. Bordner Angus Farms, 68730 County Farm Road, Sturgis, MI 49091. Phone 616-651-8353. (4-12t-20p)

**DISPERSAL: REGISTERED SIMMENTAL.** Bred cows, with calf or without. Open yearling heifers. Robert Bowler, Germfask, Mich. 49836. Phone 906-586-6121. (7/8-3t-20p)

## FARM EQUIPMENT

**BEAN COMBINE** — J.D. 55 late model, round back, extra slow speed cylinder gears, pick up ready to go — \$975.00. Frankenmuth. Phone 517-652-6612. (9-19p)

## REAL ESTATE

**CONDO AT NEW SMYRNA BEACH, FLA., FOR SALE OR RENT.** Completely furnished, two bedrooms, two baths, ocean view from the fourth floor. Tastefully decorated. Phone 517-669-8252. (9-21p)

**WHATLEY REALTY INC.:** Farms-Homes-Commercial. 4571 West US 223, Adrian, MI 49221. Phone 517-263-7855 or 517-423-7411. Auctioneer, Realtor, Vaughn Jo Lewis, 3310 Paragon Road, Tipton, MI 49287. Phone 517-431-2571. (4-6t-27p)

**FOR SALE: RESTAURANT WITH LARGE 4 BEDROOM HOME.** Sanilac County. Extra lot. Growing business. Owners retiring. Call evenings — Miss Holly 313-798-8359. (6-6t-17p)

**FOR SALE:** 40 acres, slightly rolling, located in Tuscola County between Caro and Cass City. 32 acres crop land, tile drained, two acres pine and spruce planted in 1971, nice wildlife habitat, rail fenced in pony yard with shelter, three bedroom, two bath, comfortable farm home. Also, rural brick school house on one acre in corner of farm. Donald Smith Real Estate. Phone 517-673-8151. (9-64p)

**WINTER IN EAST TEXAS!** Lovely furnished mobile homes on wooded lots available for rent by month or season. Small western town right out of the movies. No snow to shovel or traffic to combat. Comfortable winter temperatures. Senior Citizens Center for those interested. Call or write for details. Ken Mickam, P.O. Box 163, Fremont, Mich. 49412. Phone 616-924-0828. (9-58p)

**FOR SALE OR TRADE:** 2 lots at Eight Point Lake (Cook's Landing), Clare County. \$3,500 each or trade for the following of equal value: travel trailer, motor home, van, 4 wheel drive pick-up or salmon boat. Phone 517-669-9102 after 5 p.m. (9-40b)

**FOR SALE:** Lakefront lot at Rainbow Lake (Gratiot County) with sanitary sewer. Spectacular price of \$4,950 cash. Phone 517-669-9102 after 5 p.m. (9-22b)

## MISCELLANEOUS

**FOR SALE:** Bushel baskets. Like new - 500 dozen at \$5.00 per dozen. Phone 616-669-9226. (9-2t-15p)

## MISCELLANEOUS

**HERITAGE QUILT SHOW** — Oct. 23 and 24 at United Church in Ovid to benefit RAVE. Tickets \$1.00. Enter quilts now to be shown or sold. Call 517-834-2895, 517-834-5606, 517-587-6811, or 517-224-4048. (9-31b)

**FOR SALE: BAG SAWDUST AND WOOD SHAVINGS** for nursery or livestock bedding. \$1.50 per bag. Phone 313-724-0326. Delivery available. (5-6t-16p)

**COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS, LOANS AVAILABLE!** Guarantee all high school students and graduates, college freshman, sophomore will qualify! Send \$3.00 (REFUNDABLE) for brochure, instructions, questionnaire. Nationwide Scholarship Finders, Box 2257, Lynchburg, Va. 24501-0257. (9-2-31p-ts)

**OLD TIME FIDDLE MUSIC** — Twelve Michigan Fiddlers or Twelve Canadian Fiddlers on a sixty minute cassette \$4.50 each. For list of other Fiddlers, send long S.A.S.E. to Fiddle Music, Kinde, Mich. 48445. (7/8-2t-31p)

**ATTORNEY:** Farm born and raised. Engaged in General Practice at Law. Experienced in most areas of law and can bring needed expertise to most problems. Particular emphasis on estates and planning, financial problems, torts, land and bankruptcy. Particular knowledge of agriculture. Available statewide. Call or write Thomas J. Budzynski, 25550 North River Road, Mt. Clemens, MI. Phone 313-463-5253. (4-7t-57p)

**WRITE YOUR OWN WILL:** It's legal. Save money. 4—Forms fill out. \$3.50 prepaid. Fast service. Pick's, Dept. RL, Tompkinsville, KY 42167. (7/8-6t-19p-ts)

**LIVE FISH FOR STOCKING PONDS.** Also supplies, feed, windmills, aerators. Stoney Creek Trout Farm, Grant, MI 49327. Phone 616-834-7720. (6-6t-18p)

**Farm Bureau members pay 25 cents per word for all classified ads.**

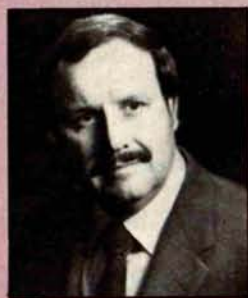
## Advertisers' Index

Rural Living would like to thank these advertisers for their support:

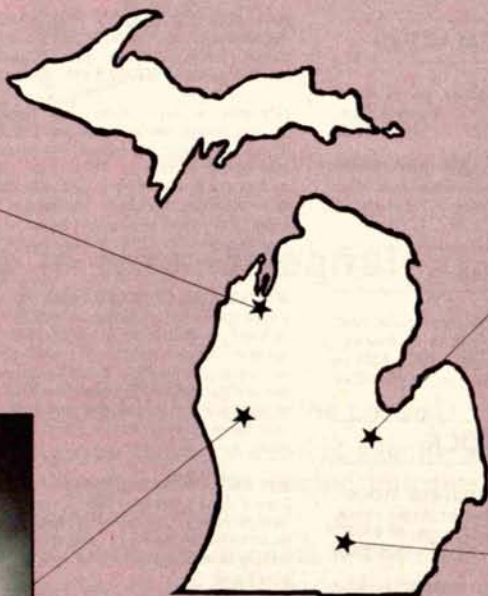
Farm Bureau Insurance Group	24	Farm Bureau Young Farmers	12
Farm Bureau Review	3	Safemark (MFB Group Purchasing)	22
Farm Bureau Travel Service	13		

# CONGRATULATIONS to four outstanding agents . . .

## serving the Farm Bureau community for 25 and 30 years



**Fred Plamondon**  
Traverse City  
Grand Traverse County  
25 Years



**Norbert Forbes, CLU**  
Saginaw  
Saginaw County  
25 Years



**Ben Landheer**  
Fremont  
Newaygo County  
30 Years



**Howard Harshbarger**  
Grass Lake  
Jackson County  
25 Years

Farm Bureau Insurance Group is proud to salute four agents who reached impressive service milestones in September 1987. They have been giving their best to Farm Bureau for 25 and 30 years, creating more secure futures for hundreds of families in their home communities.

We are proud of these four agents and the job they are doing for the people of Michigan. Like the nearly 400 other Farm Bureau Insurance agents across Michigan, these veteran agents are on the job every day, meeting their clients' insurance needs for farm, home, family, life, auto, business and retirement.

They are true professionals, trusted by their clients and dedicated to serving their communities.

For all their years of service, for their dedication, and for all their contributions to Farm Bureau's growth, we extend our greatest thanks and appreciation.

**Making your future  
a little more predictable.**

**FARM BUREAU  
INSURANCE  
GROUP**

FARM BUREAU MUTUAL • FARM BUREAU LIFE • FARM BUREAU GENERAL • FD 300077

Michigan Farm Bureau  
Rural Living Magazine  
P.O. Box 30960  
7373 W. Saginaw Hwy.  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Permit No. 380