



1 Section Tuesday, April 14, 2026 Volume 67 Number 19

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**“Auctions and Auctioneers”
by Sam Hatcher**

Auctions and Auctioneers – almost everyone has been to an auction of some type in their lifetime. For those who haven’t, it is a piece of Americana that is simply enjoyable and should not be missed. Friends, relatives, and even enemies congregate at the auction location, where a test of wits and

wills are handed out, with the top bidder coming out victorious. On the world stage, auctions have been around since approximately 500 BC, when ancient Greeks would sell women for wives and other various goods.

In the good old USA, auctions came with the Pilgrims in the 1600’s, as an auction was the quickest

(Continued on Page 8)



Poor Will's Farmland News Almanack

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April 15 -21

Poor Will's Almanack For the Third week of Middle Spring

*The Snows are thaw'd, now grass
new clothes the earth,
And Trees new hair thrust forth.
The Season's chang'd, and Brooks
late swoln with rain,
Their proper bankes contain.*

Sir Richard Fanshawe, from Ode IV, 7 of Horac

Phases of the Robin Chorus Moon And the Goose Nesting Moon

- April 1:** The Moon is full.
- April 10:** The Moon enters its final quarter.
- April 17:** The Goose Nesting Moon is new.
- April 24:** The moon enters its second quarter.
- May 1:** The Moon is full.

The Weather in the Week Ahead

The chances of a high above 50 degrees are 85 percent on almost every day during April's third quarter, and temperatures above 60 come at least half the time.

Cold 20s are rare (just a five percent chance on the 17th and 18th), but frost still strikes an average of one night in four.

Beginning on the 20th, the chances of an afternoon high in the 70s or 80s jumps from an average of 25 percent way up to 45 percent.

Rain or snow falls an average of 35 percent of the time this week of the year, with today, 15th, being the wettest day of all – carrying a 40 percent chance of rain and an additional 15 percent chance of snow.

Beginning on the 16th of the month, a major increase in the average daily amount of sunlight takes place: a rise from early April's 50/50 chance of sun or clouds up to a brighter 70 percent chance of clear to partly cloudy conditions.

Average Blooming Dates for Wildflowers and Weeds

- April 13:** Mid-Season Daffodil
- April 14:** Hawthorns, Wisteria, Jacob's Ladder
- April 15:** Redbud, Mid-Season Tulips, Trout Lily,
- April 16:** Pink Magnolia, Domestic Strawberry, White Violet
- April 17:** Garden Buttercup, Money Plant, Winter Cress,
- April 18:** Thyme Leafed Speedwell, Large-flowered Trillium
- April 19:** Watercress, Golden Ragwort, Dogwood, Speedwell, Bluets

In the Field and Garden

The first field corn is usually sown by the end of the week, and asparagus is up in the garden. First strawberries flower.

Just six more weeks remain before frost-sensitive plants can be put outside without danger of being damaged by the cold.

Grape vines begin to leaf, a sign that commercial cabbage planting is underway.

Pasture plants often have an unusually high water content in April, and your animals may not get enough nutrition from this forage.

Silage and hay supplements can take up the feeding slack.

Wood mint is at least eight inches tall, and sweet for tea.

Chives are ready for salads.

Pastures are filling with golden winter cress and purple henbit.

Journal: The Great Dandelion Bloom

The Great Dandelion Bloom is the most common and the most radical marker for the third week of Middle Spring

Of course a few dandelions started blooming in February and March.

Now, however, comes the GREAT Dandelion Flowering that begins in the Deep South - where Middle Spring comes much earlier than it does in the North - and it spreads up through the Border States like robins, reaching the 40th Parallel, the lateral midline of the United States in April,

and then creeps up to the northern states in May.

Whenever it reaches you, the Great Dandelion Flowering turns lawns and waysides golden with their blossoms and announces the greening of the high trees: the maples, oaks, mulberries, locusts, and ginkgoes sending out their first leaves.

It trumpets tulip season and the budding of peonies in the garden.

The Great Dandelion Bloom in the alleys and along the freeways lets you know that - if you had time to take to the woods - you could find hepatica, periwinkle, toad trillium, cowslip, rue anemone, and buttercups in flower.

In the vegetable garden, you might find fresh asparagus, new herbs for seasoning, maybe lettuce leaves long enough for salad.

ALMANACK LITERATURE

The Craziest Thing I Ever Did

By Terri Wilson

When I was 16, I got my first car. It was a very old Grand Am with the paint mostly off.

It was mostly rust.

It was a horrible looking car!

My cousin and I were driving through our town, when I noticed a lot of cars and people and a lot of kids on bikes.

But I never thought anything of it. I kept going.

When I got to the traffic light, I noticed there was a policemen directing traffic.

It was then that I realized I was caught in the middle of a parade.

All the people were sitting along the road watching my horrible looking car drive along with fire trucks, and bikes, and horses, etc.

So when we finally realized we were riding in a parade, my cousin and I decided to start waving at everybody who was watching.

Too bad we just didn't have any candy with us to throw out of the car to everybody!

Follow the month of April in Bill Felker's Daybook for the Year, available from Amazon. FN



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Farm Bureau President's Trip

Submitted by:
Michael K. Miller

Each year the Henry, Fulton, Williams, and Defiance County Farm Bureaus send representatives to Washington D.C. for what they call the President's trip.

The individuals attending could be a President, Vice President or county representative of each County's Farm Bureau and represent all 88 of Ohio's Counties.

We met with the President of the Ohio Farm Bureau Bill Patterson and President of the American Farm Bureau Zippy Duvall.

Mr. Duvall was our keynote address speaker, followed by speeches from Senator Bernie Moreno and Senator Jon Husted.

After that meeting, we then were to meet with one of our local Representatives which was to be Rep. Marcy Kaptur, however, Rep. Kap-

tur was not in that day and we met with her Aids instead.

Some Issues discussed were Trade with the E.U., the Farm Bill, data centers, Fertilizer Co. monopolies, and regulations to the SNAP and school lunches programs and how they are attached to the Farm Bill and affect it.

One of the main big topics that was discussed was about data centers and how the government wants to promote data or AI, and how you can control the data centers on the local level with zoning ordinances and taxes.

This was some of the main reasons we were sent to Washington D.C., to lobby for these issues and more and to make our Representatives in Washington aware of the issues concerning farmers.

This year's Farm Bureau President's Trip was from March 10 thru March 12, 2026. FN



Ohio Farm Bureau Representatives in Washington D.C.

Jesus Is King! Words of Inspiration By Pastor Mark Clausing

In 2022 my family and I moved to Toledo to minister to the greater than 15,000 Arabs in the area.

But that wasn't the only new thing to me that year, I also decided to try my hand at the annual Maumee river Walleye run.

I'm not a fisherman, but I enjoy fishing; Harrison Lake Bluegill being the majority of my experience, a far cry from the nuance of river-fishing for spawning Walleye.

I'm learning a lot.

For instance, the crazy swings in the river's flow.

A couple inches of rain in Fort Wayne makes the Maumee in Toledo extremely dangerous.

It roars, even trees get swept right through to Lake Erie.

A week ago I could carefully walk all the way across at the hole where I like to fish, as I write I'm not sure I could even take more than two steps into the river, only fishing from the rocks for me.

In Psalm 46 the Sons of Korah

express what it's like for God to be their refuge and strength amidst the tumult of life.

In verse three the waters roar and the mountains quake.

In the Bible the sea is often viewed as chaotic and dangerous, like the Maumee after rain in Fort Wayne.

The mountains are strong and safe, but even they at this moment have been thrown into the sea of chaos and destruction.

There is no safe place remaining.

Then comes starting in verse four: "There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells.

God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.

Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts."

The raging sea, the tranquil

stream.

Remember when Jesus slept through the storm before calming the seas with a word?

Jesus lived on the shores of the tranquil stream even while the sea raged around him.

This was not a matter of thinking happy thoughts, having a positive outlook, or even pretending everything is okay when it's not.

Rather, Jesus lived near the Father, close enough to hear His voice with a heart to obey.

The world was in rage, leading to the crucifixion, yet Christ was safe and secure while experiencing trouble (certainly not a stress-free life, but a secure life) because He dwelled with and followed the Father.

Father, thank you for sending the Son to die for my sins and rising again that I may live with You now and forever.

Teach me to live by the tranquil stream while the sea rages on. FN



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Blast From The Past...

* * * * *

Housework Made Easy 7/19/66

- Do things you don't like first.
- Don't iron everything Smooth and fold underwear, let your dryer fluff dry everything you can, use a fabric softener
- Dust tops of doors and places you must climb to clean only once a month.
- Rearrange cupboards so things you use often are in easy reach.
- Use a dustpan with a long handle, it prevents stooping.
- Use trays for setting and clearing the table.
- Set table silver all at once, with knives and spoons in right hand and forks in left.
- Sweep everything into a pile when cleaning kitchen or playroom, then pick out toys and other valuables.
- Store supplies and equipment where first used.
- Take a ten minute break morning and afternoon and sit with your feet up.
- Make a list on Sunday night of things you want to do during the week, then fit things so they don't pile on one day.
- Don't try to clean the whole house thoroughly at once. Do a room a week.
- Clean a whole room, from top to bottom, then you're done.
- Fit little jobs into "waiting" minutes. Straighten the living room while the kids brush their teeth before going to bed.

A Sale Sitter's Creed 9/1961

A Sale Sitter sits at sales.
A Sale Sitter does not buy at sales.

A Sale Sitter does not sell at sales.

A Sale Sitter simply sits.

A Sale Sitter ALWAYS attends the free luncheons.

A Sale Sitter always attends the pre-sale party.

A Sale Sitter ALWAYS attends the post-sale party.

A Sale Sitter diligently marks the catalog.

A Sale Sitter appraises the lots through screened lids.

A Sale Sitter is always broke but never looks it.

A Sale Sitter smiles approvingly after appraising each lot.

A Sale Sitter applauds vigorously.

A Sale Sitter always thanks the host.

A Sale Sitter always keeps his association affiliation secret.

A Sale Sitter is ALWAYS available for Sale Sitting.

Every sale needs Sale Sitters!



HERE'S A TIP for keeping dirt and grit out of the nozzle of your grease gun. Just slip and empty 12 gauge shotgun shell over the end. Works fine.

* * * * *

IF THE THREADS in a nut are acting up, here's an easy way to fix them. Just make two cuts with your hacksaw in a bolt that fits the nut and you will have a home-made tap that will do the job.

* * * * *

HERE'S A WAY to speed up frequent shifts of garden hose from one faucet or sprinkler to another. Put several extra washers in each coupling, as spacers. Doing that leaves less thread to be engaged.

* * * * *

CLIP UP THE COVERS of oil cups with a small washer soldered on an oil can's pout about 1/4" from the tip. With the washers holding the cover back, you'll find the tip in the right position to deliver oil to the cup, making oiling a one hand job.

* * * * *

TO REMOVE DRIED PAINT spots from your hands (usually discovered after you wash) apply a drop of your wife's nail polish remover and let it stand on each spot for a few minutes. The remover will soften the dry paint, and you can easily wipe it off.

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Social Change

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

by Ron Bliss

Is there anyone who doesn't believe that the world is changing?

Is there anyone that does not believe that America is changing?

Or that society is changing?

Yes, I realize, this is an ever-changing world and it has been that way ever since the beginning of time.

But the point I am trying to make is how radical society is changing.

How many times have you heard people talk about the "good old days" and how they long for them to return?

Usually, they are referencing something simple like the cost of living however, I think today's changes go far beyond what we spend in the grocery store or for gasoline.

Today's changes are life altering and can easily account for a permanent lifestyle change.

The biggest life altering change in my lifetime started following WWII when televisions became a household item.

You no longer had to sit around a radio and listen to a program, utilizing your mind and imagination – the picture was right in front of you.

Soon there were television sets in children's bedrooms, and it was no longer necessary for the family to gather together in one room.

This changed the family structure a bit.

But it did not stop there.

The content of television, over the years changed.

If you were around in the fifties, you will remember

when Elvis came on Ed Sullivan's show and sang while wiggling his hips.

Mothers were furious that they would show such a thing on television for their children to see.

Compare that to the indecent lyrics contained in rap music today or programs where they must bleep every third word someone says.

The sad thing is we think nothing of it.

Then, in more recent years, along came the internet and smart phones.

These phones will do almost anything and some of the content there isn't fit for an adult let alone a child.

Most children have a cell phone but try taking one away from a child for any length of time.

In the ensuing months and years, I think we will look back on the introduction of cell phones as a social life altering event and one that is not necessarily for the good.

On a recent Sunday, in church we sang "Fairest Lord Jesus".

That song took me back about seventy-five years to about my fifth grade, music class.

In school we sang that song, as well as "This is My Father's World".

Do you think for one minute you would get away with singing either one of those songs in a public

school today?

Absolutely not.

But I'll tell you what you can get in some schools.

Drag Queen story hour.

Now if you don't know what that is, ask around.

But that is mild compared to what is being done on many preteen and teenage children in the name of gender affirmation.

I don't want to get into that but if you are not familiar with it, educate yourself.

This will illustrate just how far we have gone in a changing society.

In the movie, "Gone with the Wind" which aired about 85 years ago, Clark Gable uttered a line stating, "Frankly my dear, I don't give a damn".

That was talked about for two generations...I remember it well.

Have we changed?

There was a time when drugs were pretty much controlled, no more.

Many states are legalizing them and even in states where they are still illegal, they are often overlooked.

All you must do is watch the evening news regarding the streets of San Francisco or Los Angeles and you'll see how far we have fallen.

It's difficult to watch a newscast anymore where they don't report violence of some sort.

On a recent weekend there were numerous mass shootings.

Have we lost all regard for human life?

Yes, this is a topic that is both sad and distasteful to discuss but if we don't talk about it, and give it no voice, it's like we lend our consent.

It would take four or five articles this size to cover all the radical changes we are going through and how they are not to the betterment of our society.

You know what they are – You watch the news.

They are every day, re-

curing events.

If you analyze each of these changes individually you will discover that many of them are based on morals.

Are there any changes in our society that could possibly coincide with a decline in morality?

I can think of one major change in our social habits that could play a gigantic role in this development. I can express it in one word. God!

Many churches are suffering from a loss of parishioners.

Walk into almost any church and this will become evident as you view the empty pews.

According to The Guardian, in 2019, the last year statics are available, 4,500 churches closed their doors for good while 3,000 new ones opened for a net loss of 1,500 churches.

Covid can be blamed for this, but the true blame must rest in peoples' hearts.

People are walking away from God.

In the past few generations, we have removed God from our schools.

We are removing God from our courts and public meetings.

Our national heritage is in God.

Our nation was founded on Godly principles.

Our constitution mentions God.

We credit God as giving us the liberties we have.

If we, as a nation, do not wake up soon and turn to God we will lose all that He has endowed upon us.

America, our freedom, our very existence, is inextricably tied to the love and grace of God.

We need to renew this essential partnership or die.

Ron was born in McClure, Ohio, raised in Napoleon and has lived in Wauseon for the past 64 years. A Navy veteran, he worked in Quality Control at Campbell Soup Company for almost 37 years. He's been writing poems since he was in school and has self-published 21 books of poetry. FN

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The Amish Cook

by Gloria Yoder



Editor's Note: Gloria is taking the week after Easter off to enjoy a bit of the spring. She will return next week, but she is sharing two comfort food classics with readers this week!

Spaghetti Supreme

1 pound spaghetti, cooked and drained
8-ounce cream cheese
8-ounce sour cream
1 cup milk
2 pounds hamburger
1 small onion, chopped
32 ounces of pizza sauce
16 ounces shredded cheddar cheese
Salt and pepper to taste

Mix hot, drained spaghetti with cream cheese and sour cream; Add milk.

Fry hamburger and onion; drain.

Add pizza sauce and seasonings.

In a greased 9- by 13-inch pan, layer half of spaghetti mixture, then hamburger mixture, then cheese.

Repeat layers.

Bake at 350 for about 30 minutes. Serves 12.

Comforting Hamburger Rice Casserole

1 pound ground beef
3/4 cup water
2 cups tomato juice
1 package taco seasoning
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 cup rice
2 cups shredded cheese
Optional: Lettuce, sour cream, salsa

Brown beef in a skillet with a lid.

Add the rest of the ingredients and simmer until rice is tender, stirring several times throughout. Top with cheese and let it melt.

Serve with lettuce, sour cream, salsa.

Readers may write Gloria with culinary or cultural questions at: Gloria Yoder, 10510 E. 350th Avenue, Flat Rock, IL 62427.

FN

Vintage Recipe

Farmland News 5/5/65

Chocolate Slices

8 cups Kellogg's Corn Flakes or 2 cups Corn Flake crumbs

1/2 cup soft butter or margarine

one third cup sugar

one third cup cocoa

1 egg, slightly beaten

1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring

1 cup shredded or flaked coconut

1/2 cup chopped nutmeats

one fourth cup soft butter or margarine

2 cups sifted confectioner's sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring

2 tablespoons milk

If using Corn Flakes, crush into fine crumbs.

Combine butter, sugar, cocoa, egg and vanilla in top of double boiler.

Cook over hot water, stirring constantly, until mixture is well blended and slightly thickened.

Remove from heat.

Add coconut, nutmeats, and Corn Flake Crumbs, mix well.

Press into ungreased 8 x 8 inch pan. Chill.

Beat butter until fluff, add sugar gradually, beating until well blended.

Stir in vanilla and just enough milk so that mixture will spread easily.

Spread over cocoa layer. Chill.

Cover with Chocolate Glaze, let stand until firm.

Cut into squares to serve.

Yields (25) 1-1/2 inch squares

Chocolate Glaze:

2 squares (2 oz) unsweetened chocolate

1 tablespoon butter or margarine

Melt chocolate with butter in heavy saucepan over very low heat or over hot but not boiling water, mix well.

Spread over vanilla layer of Chocolate Slices.

Recipe Of The Week

Carrot Cake Cookies

Cookies:
2 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 cup unsalted butter, softened
3/4 cup white sugar
3/4 cup dark brown sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla paste

2 cups freshly shredded carrots
Optional crushed pecans for topping

Frosting:
1/2 cup unsalted butter
8-oz. cream cheese, softened
1 teaspoon vanilla paste
1-1/2 cups powdered sugar
2-3 tablespoons milk

Cookies: Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Combine dry ingredients (flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon) in a bowl; set aside.

In a mixing bowl cream butter and sugars, then mix in eggs and vanilla. Stir in grated carrots and dry ingredients.

Spoon balls of dough onto the baking sheet about 2 inches apart.

Bake in 350 degree oven for 12-14 minutes or until tops look almost dry. Let cookies cool completely.

Frosting: Brown the butter in a pan over medium heat, stirring often, until it reaches a deep golden color.

Mix browned butter and cream cheese, then add vanilla and powdered sugar.

Add milk until the frosting is smooth and creamy.

Assemble by spreading or piping the frosting on cooled cookies.

Top with crushed pecans if desired.

This Recipe of the Week is from Mary Schroll, McComb, Ohio

OUR RECIPE OF THE WEEK BOX IS GETTING VERY LOW ON RECIPES!!!

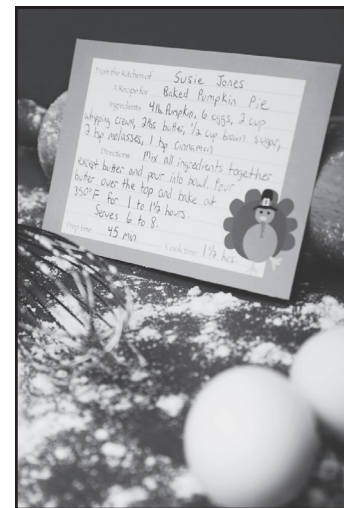
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Be sure to send a few extra recipes along for our Reader's Recipes.

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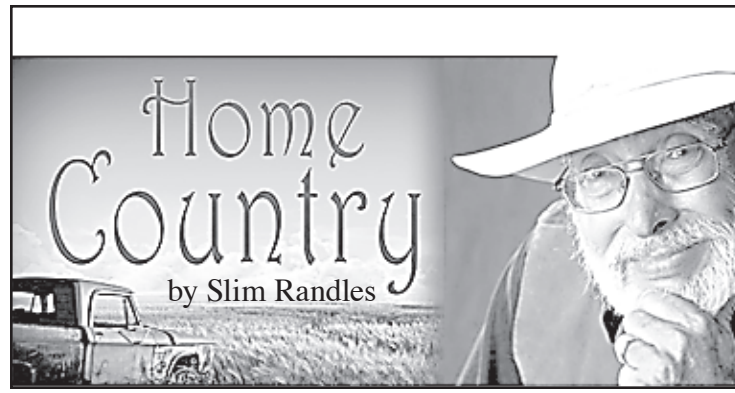
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The Aging Game: Growing Old Instead of Growing Up

Thoughts Remembered...

by Faye Harris



When old Joe Gilliam began digging that hole in his front yard, out there close to the street, neighbors watched and wondered.

When he got his grandson to help him carry the shade tree sapling from his pickup to the hole, people nodded.

Mystery solved.

Old Joe's planting a tree.

After removing the root mass from the five-gallon pot, the grandson disappeared and Old Joe was left to care for the baby tree.

He carefully spread the tiny feeder roots out and tucked them in with soil.

Then he packed more dirt around the tree's base

and soaked it well with the hose.

No one else saw anything odd in Joe planting that tree, either, but Joe's been retired now going on 20 years.

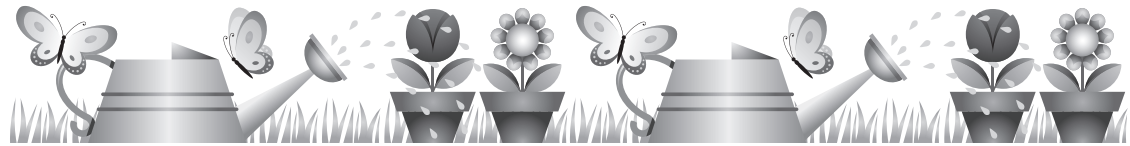
He's old and getting more frail each year. By the time that sapling gets large enough to give homes to squirrels and birds and shade to neighbors and a resting place for dogs, Joe will have been long gone.

Planting a tree is an affirmation of faith in the future.

It is a gift to those yet unborn.

It is a legacy of goodness, an old man's prayer.

Brought to you by "The Long Dark," a novel of Alaska by Slim Randles. FN



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fayeharris77@yahoo.com

I've recently discovered nature has a way of taking over.

To prove this point, I've recently found my latest advancement dealt with my age instead of any job advancement; that my little black book has been replaced by a cell phone; and the list of "contacts" includes a lot of medical people.

Lately, I've also noticed:

- The gleam in my eyes now comes from forgetting my sunglasses and has nothing to do with the opposite sex

- My daily mile is taken care of by my numerous trips to the bathroom

- My children are now getting senior discounts at many stores

- Before my husband begins to chew on a steak, he first must look for his dentures

- More and more of my clothing now has velcro closures.

At first I thought this was a new and ingenious idea to get people to toss out the old stuff and buy some new; now I believe it was invented by some old guy whose fingers refused to work like they used to.

And when buying beer, the clerk no longer asks for my ID, but she does offer to

help me lift an 8-pound bag of potatoes out of my shopping cart.

To top off this age thing, our son recently suggested his father replace his bathtub with a walk-in shower.

"Then I won't have to worry about your not being able to lift your legs like you used to," he informed us.

However, on New Year's Eve, both the old man and I realized "times, they are a-changin'."

Around 8:30 I looked at my droopy-eyed mate and asked, "Are you ready for bed?"

He didn't argue; he just began un-velcroing his shirt.

"I was about to ask you the same thing," he said.

Then he started to laugh. "You know," he said, "this growing old is not for amateurs."

"Probably why we have to have a few extra years under our belt to do the deed," I agreed before kissing him goodnight.

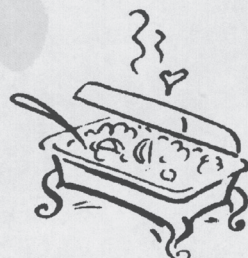
(At least I still remembered we did that every night before going to sleep.)

Having written for newspapers since I was in school in the 50's, in my retirement I am now writing for posterity... and enjoy getting and sharing news about the "olden days."

FN

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Gorrell Brothers pictures from the past.



Whalen Realty & Auction, Neapolis, Ohio

AUCTIONS
(Continued From Page 1)

way to turn assets into cash. The ascending auction method was used, where bidders were asked to raise their bids until a sale price was realized.

The auction chant used by the auctioneers is known as a bidding call, auction cry or cattle rattle.

They use a rhythmic chant combining current bid, next asking price and filler words such as: "Will ya' give me" – "Can I get" – "looking for" to prompt bidders to bid.

Beginnings of Northwest Ohio Auctions

Over the last 100 years, Northwest Ohio has been blessed with many notable auction companies and auctioneers.

A few are listed below.

One of the oldest auctioneer firms still in business today is Gorrell Brothers, headquartered in Paulding, Ohio and started by Jesse Don Gorrell and his brother Keith in the 1920's.

Jesse taught school and sold horses on the side, getting "for sale" messages from local barber shops in the area once a week, as this



John Whalen Jason Whalen Mike Murry George Bly

was before the advent of telephones in every home.

Keith billed himself as the "world's largest auctioneer", clocking the scale at over 300 pounds, which ultimately contributed to his untimely early death, leaving Jesse as the sole owner of the business.

Jesse had two boys, Chuck and Cliff.

Chuck started in the auctioneering and real estate business in Hicksville, Ohio, Cliff started in the Paulding, Ohio area in early 1951, working at Weatherhead in Antwerp, and running a real estate and auction business on the side out of his home in Paulding.

Cliff's son Larry joined the family business in the 1970's, acquiring Uncle Chuck's location in Hicks-

ville, running that office until 2006.

Concentrating on a more user friendly auction environment, he started having indoor auctions in the mid 1980's and in 1990 he built a large indoor facility at the north edge of Paulding.

Larry's son Donny, and now grandson Zach, are the 4th and 5th generations to have joined the ranks of the family business, proclaiming "we sell the earth and everything on it", which was a slogan originally created by Cliff in the early 1950's.

Another old time Napoleon area auctioneer was Henry Huner, who started in the auctioneering business

(Continued on Page 9)

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Yoder and Frey pictures from the past.



AUCTIONS
(Continued From Page 8)

in the early 1950's, auctioneering and selling real estate as well as farming.

In the mid 1960's Henry took under his wing, a young, energetic man named John Whalen and the rest is history.

I can still remember them from going to auctions with my Dad when I was little.

John would proclaim, "...ole honey, whatcha gonna bid honey" and I kept thinking they were actually selling bees and honey.

In 1967, John refurbished an old school house in Napoleon, Ohio and made it into an indoor auction arena and started Whalen Auction and Realty.

In later years, he took his nephew Jason Whalen under his wing to assist with auctioneering and added two other auctioneers, Mike Murry and George Bly ... the business is still going strong 55+ years later.

In 1947, two guys named Tim Yoder and Elias Frey held their first auction over in the Deshler, Ohio area.

Then they moved north

of Archbold, Ohio at the Grime Farm, and eventually to their current location west of Archbold on County Road 24, just north of State Route 2.

Yoder and Frey as it came to be called, sold farm machinery and related items, holding an auction twice a month until the turn of the century, when the auction went to a once a month format, then when Covid arrived it went to an every other month auction.

A few years ago, a hay and straw auction was added on Mondays.

Today, Yoder and Frey is still going strong under the leadership of a "young" man named Kim Wyse.

Kim along with his band of merry men and women including loaders and office personnel, make Yoder and Frey a very busy place on Mondays for hay and straw auctions, and a couple of extra times a year for antique farm machinery auctions, as well as the every other month machinery auction.

Aaron Siefker is another
(Continued on Page 10)



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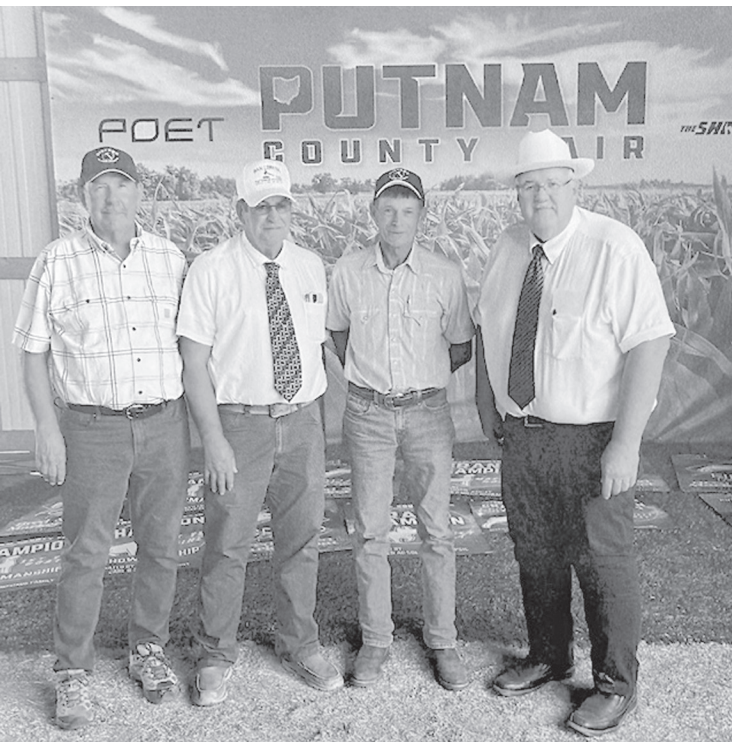
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Siefker Auctions from the past.



Auctioneers: L-R: Roger Ford, Dan Limber, Dan Baker and Aaron Siefker

new equipment and farmer closeouts are held.

Another well known auctioneer was Col. Donald Steinke from Montpelier, Ohio...who in the early 1960's became a known name on the auction circuit, conducting livestock auctions and community events, eventually evolving from traditional auctions to specialized focusing on real estate.

Shane Sumner worked as an auctioneer for Col. Steinke and shared a few thoughts about a special guy.

Col. Steinke has been a family friend since my childhood.

Throughout those years, I attended numerous auctions with my father, not only locally but in several different states.

Being around that environment sparked my interest in the auction business.

When I decided that I would like to pursue it myself, I contacted Col. Steinke, and without hesitation he took me on as a clerk and eventually a ringman.

As time went on, I felt the calling to obtain my auctioneer's license, and once again he was a great encourager and supporter.

At that time, you first had to serve as an apprentice auctioneer under the sponsorship of a licensed auctioneer, and he gladly accepted that role as my sponsor.

After serving a 12-month apprenticeship and attending auction school, you were then eligible to sit for the auctioneer's licensing exam.

In 1996, I obtained my auctioneer's license, and from that point on Col. Steinke continued to mentor me as I began conducting auctions and was entrusted to manage them under his guidance.

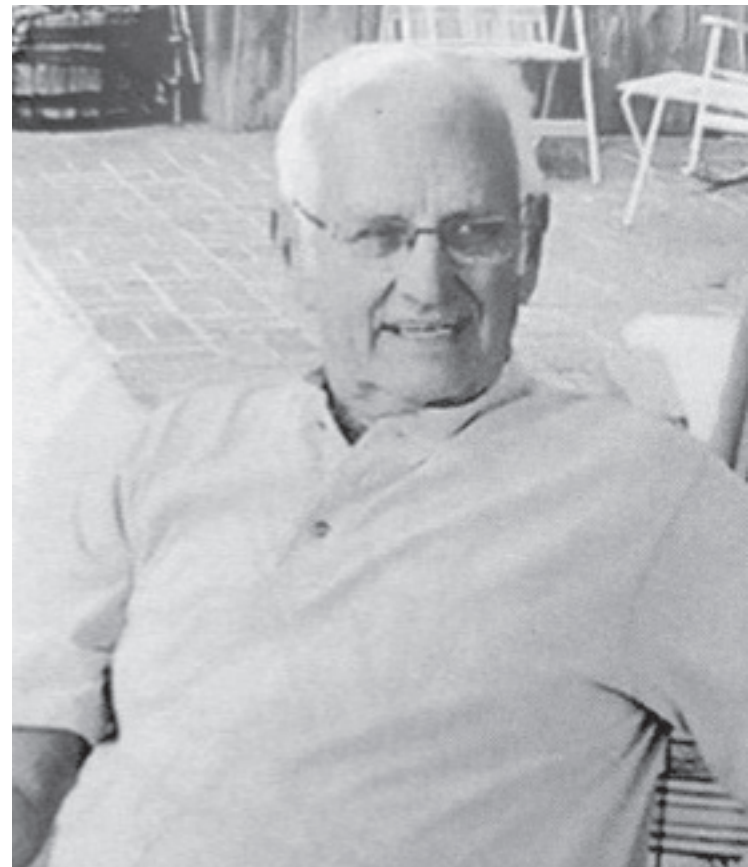
In 2003, I received my real estate license, which



Col. Donald Steinke



Staci Dye, Col. Steinke, Shane Sumner 2010 Staff



Don Steinke relaxing on his back porch.

opened the door not only to private listings but also to selling real estate at auction.

Selling farmland at auction has been, and continues to be, one of the most beneficial ways to market land.

One of the most popular methods for marketing larger acreages is the multi-parcel method, and Col. Steinke was very open to using

(Continued on Page 11)



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AUCTIONS (Continued From Page 9)

prominent area auctioneer, who started out in Glandorf, Ohio and then moved to Ottawa, Ohio.

He started selling machinery with his father in

the 1970's, eventually going "alone" in 1984.

Siefker's are famous for the "Frogtown Connection", holding a couple of high volume farm machinery auctions every year at the Frogtown grain elevator complex, where old and



Peter Lugbill



Eli Lugbill



Sylvanus Lugbill



It was started in 1918 by 3 Lugbill brothers – Peter, Sylvanus and Eli.

The auction barn and stockyards began in 1934 with auctions being held every week.

In 1943 there was a major fire with the original barns being lost and a new auction barn was built in 1947.

A Lugbill packing plant was added, which eventually was acquired by Dinner Bell in 1957.

Dinner Bell simply herded their purchases through a hallway into the packing plant, where all of those Dinner Bell goodies from years gone by were produced.

The stockyards themselves were a massive structure, with catwalks snaking through the entire complex and on auction days, complete with a company restaurant, it was a gathering place for both buyers and sellers of almost every kind of livestock.

Kids especially loved

walking the catwalks.

Area farmers hauled livestock to the facility until 2001.

The non-family owners at that time, decided the land was more valuable for a strip mall than a livestock yard – end of an era.

Types of Auctions

Have you ever stopped to think how many different types of auctions there are.

Below are some different types and a few explanations on the more unique ones:

- Farm Auctions
- Estate Auctions
- Antique Auctions
- Silent Auctions
- Benefit & Charity Auc-

(Continued on Page 12)

AUCTIONS

(Continued From Page 10)

this tool as an effective way of offering land for sale.

For more than 25 years, I had the privilege and honor of working alongside Col. Steinke, and I owe a tremendous amount of gratitude to him for the success I continue to experience in the auction business today.

- As a side note Shane now works for AA Brown Auctions and Mary Stoller Realty and Auctions.

Livestock Auctions

In addition to auctioneers, there were also livestock auction houses in the area.

Two of the very well

known stockyards from the past are: Bauman Stockyards and Lugbill's Livestock Auction.

Ralph Brown and Charlie Bauman started buying livestock in the 1930's, at a place called Bauman Stockyards in Napoleon.

The stockyard actually started on North Street in Napoleon, next to the old coal silos, and shared an office with the Yarnell and Yarnell Coal Yard, however, suddenly they had to move when Charlie left a bawling calf in the pen for a couple of nights.

The next morning, this in turn prompted my Great Aunt Mary Yarnell, to

throw Charlie, his desk, his books, and more outside .

The stockyard moved to Oakwood Ave. shortly thereafter.

Livestock was shipped mainly to packing houses in Detroit and Chicago.

Eventually the stockyards sold to Bill Funchion and John McBride, who ran it until the mid 1980's, when it finally closed and was turned into a housing development.

Lugbill Livestock Auction was a mainstay for local livestock farmers in Archbold, Ohio.

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AUCTIONS

(Continued From Page 11)

tions

- Vickery Auctions – Second price sealed bid bidding
- Real Estate Auctions
- Simple Clock Ascending Auctions – Continue price mechanism
- Simultaneous Auctions – multiple lots bidding
- Live Auctions
- Online Auctions
- Livestock Auctions
- Farm Machinery Auctions
- Penny Auctions – bidding fee model
- English Auctions – open ascending auction
- Dutch Auctions – descending price format
- Japanese Auctions – no bidding
- Reverse Auctions – seller bidding system
- Sealed Bid Auctions – blend bidding method
- Absolute Auctions – no reserve price
- Reserve Auctions – minimum bid requirement
- Produce Auctions
- Double Auctions – market clearing mechanism
- Blind Auctions – bidding without seeing competition (sealed bid)
- Minimum Bid Auctions
- Swedish Auctions – like English auction but less regulations
- Chinese Auctions – combination of raffle and auction
- Candle Auctions – prevent last minute bidding, candle is lit when auction starts, bidding ends when candle burns out
- Combo Auctions – known as “two stop auction” – combination of sealed and absolute, minimum or reverse auctions

Auctioneer Song

Back in 1956, country music singer Leroy Van Dyke sang the “Auctioneer Song” and the lyrics of that song still ring true today.

How many kids have listened to that song, then wanted to become an auctioneer?

I’ll bet several.

[Intro]

Hey, well alright, sir here we go there an’ what are ya gonna give for ‘em?

I have a 600 dollar down here now 10 now 25 an’

now 35, an’ now there 50, now 60, will ya give me 60, now 75, 75 another 85 dollars and buy ‘em there

[Verse 1]

There was a boy in Arkansas who wouldn’t listen to his ma

When she told him he should go to school

He’d sneak away in the afternoon, take a little walk then pretty soon

You’d find him at the local auction barn

He’d stand and listen carefully then pretty soon he began to see

How the auctioneer could talk so rapidly

He said, “Oh my it’s do or die I’ve got to learn that auction cry

Gotta make my mark and be an auctioneer”

[Chorus]

25 dollar bid it now, 30 dollar 30

Will ya gimme 30 make it a 30 bid it on a 30 dollar

Will ya gimme 30, who’ll bid a 30 dollar bid?

30 dollar bid it now 35

Will ya gimme 35 to make it a 35 to bid it at 35

Who would a-bid it at a 35 dollar bid?

[Verse 2]

As time went on he did his best and all could see he didn’t jest

He practiced calling bids both night and day

His pap’d find him behind the barn just a-workin

up an awful storm

As he tried to imitate the auctioneer

Then his pap said “Son we just can’t stand to have a mediocre man

Sellin’ things at auction usin’ our good name

I’ll send you off to auction school and then you’ll be nobody’s fool

You can take your place among the best”

[Chorus]

35 dollar bid it now, 40 dollar 40

Will ya gimme 40 make it a 40 bid it on a 40 dollar

Will ya gimme 40, who’ll bid a 40 dollar bid?

40 dollar bid it now 45

Will ya gimme 45 to make it a 45 to bid it at 45

Who would a-bid it at a 45 dollar bid?

[Verse 3]

So from that boy who went to school there grew a man who played it cool

He came back home a full fledged auctioneer

And the people came from miles around just to hear him make that rhythmic sound

That filled their hearts with such a happy cheer

His fame went out from shore to shore he had all he could do and more

He had to buy a plane to get around

Now he’s the tops in all the land let’s pause to give that man a hand

He’s the best of all the

auctioneers

[Chorus]

45 dollar bid it now, 50 dollar 50

Will ya gimme 50 make it a 50 bid it on a 50 dollar

Will ya gimme 50, who’ll bid a 50 dollar bid?

50 dollar bid it now 55

Will ya gimme 55 to make it a 55 to bid it at 55

Sold that hog for a 50 dollar bill

[Outro]

Hey, alright, sir open the gate, let em’ out and walk ‘em boys. Here a comes a lot number 29 in, what’re ya gonna give for ‘em? I got a 25 I get a 35 an’ now a 50 make it 50 better t’ make it 55, 60, will ya give me 65, 75, an’ now 85, an’ now 95, 100, an’ now a 25, an’ get a 75 an’ a 2 an’ a 3 an’ a 4 an’ a 5 an’ a 6 an’ a 7 an’ a 800 dollars gonna buy ‘em there

Auctions Today

The auction business is alive and well yet today, even though many auctions are done online only, some are held onsite where friends, relatives and enemies still attend, still look for a bargain, and still feel good inside when the auctioneer cries SOLD, and yet another treasure is carted home.

As long as there is someone who wants to turn an asset into money, there will forever be auctions and auctioneers.

Auctions and auctioneers, another part of life on the farm.

Sam Hatcher is a freelance writer who grew up on a farm south of Napoleon and still farms there with his brother. He now lives near Cecil and has retired from teaching at Paulding High School.

A Big Farmland News Thank You

Farmland News would like to thank the many past and present auctioneers in Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan who have been very loyal to our newspaper.

We appreciate what you do and wish we could mention every auctioneer who has made our paper the “Auction Paper”.

Our readers are greatly disappointed when their paper is delivered late and they look at the auction pages only to discover they have missed one they would have loved to gone to. FN

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Mail to: Farmland News P.O. Box 240, Archbold, OH 43502.

Or phone in your comments to us at 419-445-9456 or at our toll-free number 1-888-445-9456.

Pettisville FFA – 76th Annual FFA Banquet

By: Ali Genter, Pettisville FFA Reporter

On March 26, 2026, the Pettisville FFA Chapter held the 76th Annual Pettisville FFA Banquet at Pettisville Missionary Church.

Administrators, donors, and other area chapter officers were invited to attend.

This year, 14 FFA members were awarded Discovery Degrees.

The Discovery Degree is awarded to 7th and 8th grade members in their first year of FFA members.

The Star Discovery Degree was awarded to one 8th grader, Kole Klopfenstein, and three 7th graders; Alec Genter, Ames Genter, and Landri Rufenacht.

All four award recipients have been involved with attending meetings, volunteer activities, and have participated in at least one career development event or more.

Pettisville FFA had 20 members receive their Greenhand Degrees.

This degree is given to freshmen and above first-year high school members.

Ali Genter was the Star Greenhand winner.

Ali has been actively competing in multiple state level CDEs in the past year as well as being an outstanding leader in the FFA.

Ten members received their Chapter FFA Degrees.

The requirements to obtain this degree are having the Greenhand FFA degree, working 45 hours for their SAE or earning \$150, participating in three chapter events, and leading a discussion about agriculture topics.

Bailey Booth was this year's Star Chapter winner.

Bailey served as a chapter officer this year and has participated in many CDEs. She has also been an amazing leader throughout her time here in the FFA.

Pettisville FFA had a successful turnout this year for Fall sales.

The top four sellers were first place-Ava Genter, second place-Jamison Beck, third place- Kaleb Wyse, and fourth place-Hannah Fox.

Nofziger Trucking sponsored the Good Record-keeping Award again this year. This award was given

to students who have kept their records consistent in the Agricultural Experience Tracker (AET).

Six FFA students were awarded. Courtney Wiemken was the overall Outstanding Recordkeeping Award recipient.

This year we had two FFA members receive the Mr. & Miss Volunteer Award. These students are quick to volunteer and complete tasks that may not be the most fun.

This year's winners were Carter Beck and Hannah Fox.

The Top Scholar Award is for a Junior and Senior FFA member who has the highest GPA over all their classes through the first semester of the current school year.

The Top Scholar Award recipients were Ava Genter and Kaleb Wyse.

The Ron Rupp Leadership award was received by Ava Genter.

This award is given to a student either junior or senior, who exhibits outstanding leadership.

Ava has shown outstanding leadership through the four years she has been involved in FFA.

She most recently served as the chapter President for the past two years.

The Outstanding Junior Award was awarded to Kaleb Wyse.

He recently served as the chapter sentinel and has attended every chapter FFA meeting this past year.

He has competed in CDEs and has attended multiple events to where he has been able to grow his leadership skills even further this year.

He will also be receiving his State Degree this April in Columbus at the Ohio FFA State Convention.

Burkholder Farms sponsored this award.

The Outstanding Senior Award was awarded to Olivia Beck, Katie Moore, and Courtney Wiemken.

These outstanding ladies have been very involved in their last years here in the FFA.

All three served as chapter officers, volunteered, grew and maintained their SAEs, participated in CDEs, and showed their dedication to the FFA Chapter. Burkhold-



The 2026-2027 Pettisville FFA Sweetheart was chosen from a chapter vote and announced at the annual FFA banquet. Ava Genter (right), the 2025-2026 Sweetheart, crowned Paige Powell (left) as the 2026-2027 Chapter Sweetheart.

er sponsored this award.

The FFA Alumni awarded four seniors and one recent graduate, who are planning or are enrolled in an agricultural or related major when furthering their education in college, with a scholarship of \$500.00.

Noelle Fox, a college student at Huntington University, received one of the scholarships and plans to use it to continue her education with a degree in Agribusiness-Animal Production.

Ava Genter, Olivia Beck, Courtney Wiemken, and Creighton Aeschliman were the four seniors who also received this amazing scholarship.

This year's Honorary Chapter Degree was given to Hannah Meller and Tony and Annalisa Wiemken.

This degree is for those who help support and encourage advancement in agricultural education.

These three individuals have helped out our chapter tremendously.

Hannah Meller serves as the alumni's scholarship and grant committee chairperson and has helped us in many ways whenever we ask.

Mr. and Mrs. Wiemken helped us make popcorn for pumpkin fest every year and as well as secure the ice cream machine for banquet.

We wouldn't know what to do without these individuals.

We send many thanks to them for always being willing to help out.

For this year's Pest Hunt, over 13,000 points were turned into the chapter.

The top participant was

Kaleb Wyse. Kaleb turned in 4,800 points earning first place.

The Agriscience Research Award was received by Gavin Sifuentes, Creighton Aeschliman, and Naomi Richer.

These three students completed an agriscience fair research project for their research SAEs.

They presented their findings at various sciences fairs including the District 1 Agriscience Fair, regional science fair, and Ohio FFA Agriscience fair.

Their award was sponsored by Beck Show Lambs.

The Officer Book Gold Ratings were given out.

Katie Moore, Secretary, and Genevive Galvin, Treasurer, received gold ratings for their officer books this year and will be recognized at the Ohio FFA State Convention.

The Weber Family spon-

sored this award.

Those who scored over 350 leadership points earned the Positive Points Performer Award.

Thirty-six FFA members received this year's award.

The top performers in each class were: Freshman Ali Genter, Sophomore Bailey Booth, Junior Kaleb Wyse, and Senior Olivia Beck.

Rufenacht Farms sponsored this award.

Ava Genter was the 2025-2026 Chapter Sweetheart and crowned the new 2026-2027 Chapter Sweetheart Paige Powell.

To conclude the 76th Annual Banquet, the 2026-2027 Officer Team was installed: Kaleb Wyse as President, Bailey Booth as Vice President, Carter Beck as Secretary, Hannah Fox as Treasurer, Ali Genter as Reporter, Ty Morrison as Sentinel, and Ben Nagel as Student Advisor. FN



The 2026-2027 Pettisville FFA Officer Team was installed at the 76th Annual FFA Banquet on March 26, 2026. Back row (left to right): Ty Morrison-Sentinel, Ben Nagel-Student Advisor, Kaleb Wyse-President, Carter Beck-Secretary, Front row (left to right): Hannah Fox-Treasurer, Bailey Booth-Vice President, Ali Genter-Reporter



The top salespersons from the Pettisville FFA Sales were recognized at the banquet on March 26, 2026. From left to right, Kaleb Wyse was 3rd place, Jamison Beck was 2nd place, Hannah Fox was 4th place, and Ava Genter was 1st place.

Land & Legacy

Planning for Farmers and Ranchers

by Erick Barone

While farmers and ranchers confront the same problems as any business owner regarding succession planning, wealth preservation, and estate taxes, they also face many unique issues. Specific tax rules, regulations, and the nature of their industry requires a specialized focus and expertise when planning for such clients.

Farming and ranching operators may also have particularly strong convictions regarding long-established family enterprises that are heavily concentrated in real property.

Many farms and ranches have been in the family for several generations, and a prevalent desire is to keep ownership of the land in the hands of family members: both those involved in operations as well as those who may not be involved.

Of course, this generally gives rise to unique problems governing appropriate income apportionment, control, and estate equalization.

As a result, a comprehensive understanding of the relevant issues and techniques is crucial to the effective implementation of appropriate legal and tax strategies, ensuring the preservation of the farm or ranch for succeeding generations while bestowing long-term peace of mind on operators.

Challenges

Farm and ranching operations are especially vulnerable to poor economic conditions. Capital requirements are high and return on investment is sometimes low. Operators typically accumulate most of their equity through earnings and gradual increases in asset values from growth and inflation; net worth tends to result more from growth in the value of production as-

sets rather than income accumulation. It is also critical for operators to maintain a debt-equity structure which assures survival through periods of adverse weather and market conditions.

Likewise, agriculture also is extremely sensitive to export markets. For example, high interest rates in the 1980s contributed to a strong dollar, which in turn contributed to a drop in U.S. farm exports. Farmers and ranchers were ultimately hurt by the decline in the price of agricultural products and real estate.

Operators with excessive debt combined with high interest rates and low prices often did not survive during the era. For today's farmers and ranchers to survive, maintaining financial solvency is important. For a family enterprise to thrive for generations, establishing and maintaining an effective long-term plan is essential.

Details Of The Industry

Attitudes And Outlooks

Many successful family farms and ranches are built over generations, creating a deep personal bond and sense of identity in the operation. Furthermore, the physical nature of the labor that goes into building a farm often creates a unique perspective by the operator, one that may place a strong emphasis on the character, stability, and integrity that farming or ranching signifies. The fruits of the many years of labor include self-respect, personal satisfaction and a tangible, permanent family legacy.

Nature Of Work

Farming and ranching operations have become more complex in recent years. Farm output and income are strongly influenced by the weather, disease, fluctuations in prices of domestic farm products, and federal farm programs.

Both farmers and ranchers operate machinery and maintain equipment and facilities, and both track technological improvements in animal breeding and seeds and choose new or existing products.

Farming and ranching can be hazardous work. Tractors and other machinery can cause serious injury, and operators must be constantly alert on the job.

The proper operation of equipment and handling of chemicals are necessary to avoid accidents, safeguard health, and protect the environment.

Operators of small farms and ranches usually perform all tasks, physical and administrative. They keep records for management and tax purposes, service machinery, maintain buildings, and grow vegetables and raise animals.

By contrast, operators of large farms and ranches have employees who help with the physical work. Farmers on crop farms usually work from sunrise to sunset during the planting and harvesting seasons.

The rest of the year, they plan next season's crops, market their output, and repair machinery.

On livestock-producing farms and ranches, work goes on throughout the year.

Animals, unless they are grazing, must be fed and watered every day, and dairy cows must be milked two or three times a day.

Many livestock and dairy farmers monitor and attend to the health of their herds, which may include assisting in the birthing of animals.

Tailored Planning

Since each family farm or ranch is unique, no single approach to estate and business planning works for everyone.

It is important to understand that the farm or ranch involves the interaction of people in the strong bonds of family, who are engaged

in the business and who make decisions affecting the business.

It also is important that estate and succession planning adopt a long-term planning horizon and implement planning strategies in a timely and efficient manner to accomplish intended goals. Most farmers and ranchers desire that the operation continue when they are gone, though a few do not. When the operation will not be continued, the focus shifts to transferring, liquidating, and distributing equity to the heirs while minimizing any loss in value.

Potential Planning Issues And Concerns

Since operating a farm or ranch is difficult, designing a strategy for the ultimate transition of the business upon the primary operator's demise can be confusing. There are a variety of issues and concerns related to estate and business planning that should be addressed, the most common of which are discussed below.

Farm Economics

Farm economics differ from that of most other businesses. An acre of off-farm land might cost \$5,000 but have a rental value of only \$200 per year, a 4% return. Compare this with residential and commercial real estate which typically have returns in the range of 8%-10%.

This means that the current productivity of off-farm land is relatively low, and much of its value lies in the possibility of future appreciation. It also means that farming is extraordinarily capital-intensive.

For example, a dairy operation typically requires about one acre of off-farm land to support one cow. Therefore, a typical 200-head dairy operation requires 200 acres of land with a value of approximately \$2,000,000. This of course doesn't in-

clude the cost of the cow or a modern computerized milking parlor (which can cost \$1,000,000).

Government Programs

Farm and ranch subsidies have a significant influence on agricultural production in the global and local economy. Farm subsidy supporters argue that subsidizing agricultural products helps ensure farmers have a constant stable income, and that certain vital commodities will always be available through domestic production, ensuring U.S. independence, security and economic health.

The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill) was originally set to expire on December 31, 2023, although it has been extended in one year increments multiple times, most recently on November 12, 2025, extending it through September 30, 2026. While the legislation permanently authorized crop insurance regardless of subsequent expiration, farmers may reasonably believe that subsidy programs will be less prevalent in the future due to federal fiscal constraints and the use of farm bills to advance non-farm spending.

Note that the type of organization established (LLC, partnership, or corporation), amount of off-farm land under management, and number of owners within the organization can all impact eligibility for agricultural subsidies. As a result, the creation and modification of estate and business plans should always be cognizant of the extent to which eligibility for certain programs may be affected.

Lack Of Liquidity And Diversification

Due to the unique nature of farming and ranching, operators tend to put all income and profits back into the operation in the form of

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illiquid assets such as farmland and equipment. At an operator's death or at the transition of the operation, problems can be caused due to a lack of assets easily convertible into cash.

Operating Loans

Operating loans may be used to purchase items needed for a successful farm operation.

These items include livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, repairs, insurance, and other operating expenses. Loans for annual operating expenses (seasonal loans) are normally repaid within one year.

Loans for equipment and livestock purchases are scheduled for repayment over longer periods. Some loans are obtained through private credit and some through government programs.

These loans can be substantial based upon the time of year.

Yearly operating loan balances can be very high in the spring and completely paid off by December. This can cause a problem depending on the time of year operators become disabled or die.

The loss of the key operator can be devastating at any time and especially during the time that an operating loan exists.

The need to recognize the loss of an operator in the succession plan is crucial.

Depreciation Recapture

Certain farm related property can be depreciated. Property subject to depreciation that is subsequently sold or exchanged can be subject to recapture.

When real property in a farm or ranch is sold at a gain and accelerated depreciation has been claimed, the owner may be required to pay tax at ordinary rates to the extent of the excess accelerated depreciation.

Succession Planning For Active And Non-Active Children

One of the most sensitive issues for parents within the operation is balancing the interests of the children who work in the operation against the interests of the non-participating children.

More so than in most businesses, children establish their "right" to the farm or ranch through sweat equity. Working on the farm or ranch is not for everyone; some children would rather pursue other career opportunities. When there are active children involved in the operation, farm and ranch operators will sometimes gift or assist an active child to acquire their own ownership interest in a portion of the land, livestock, or equipment. It is rare, however, for a non-active child to acquire an ownership interest in these assets since current operators realize that non-active ownership can sometimes stifle farming operations.

This is especially a problem in the typical situation in which the farm or ranch is the only significant asset in the family.

Will the non-active children feel slighted, or will they feel lucky that they are free from the rigors of farming/ranching life?

If the farm or ranch represents the family heritage, how can a non-active child feel a part of that heritage?

Resolution of this question is fundamental to the continuation of the operation but is limited by the basic economics of farming. The following factors must be weighed:

- Existing assets and cash flow available for both funding the legacy in the operation and providing for the non-active heirs;
- Dedication and ability of the successor;
- Parents' viewpoint regarding contribution equity of the successor and proportion of operation that should be attributed to the successor as a result;
- Desire by non-active heirs for continuity of the operation or preference for liquidation of their share;
- Ability and willingness of successor(s) and non-active heirs to work together in harmony; and
- Parents' viewpoint on continuity of the operation versus equality of inheritances for the heirs.

An additional matter to consider is the feasibility and reasonable opportunity given to non-active heirs to become active. Did these children have a chance to

work in the family enterprise, or was that chance thwarted or at least hindered by the fact that an older sibling was provided the opportunity, and once accepted, foreclosed that opportunity to other heirs?

Retirement For The Senior Generation

Any plan to pass the farm or ranch to the next generation should allow for a secure retirement for the senior generation. Frequently operators don't have sufficient cash flow during their working years to accumulate liquid savings or otherwise save enough on a tax-deferred basis for retirement.

Similarly, it is not usually possible to put in place a non-qualified deferred compensation plan when the junior generation is taking over, since there is not sufficient dependable cash flow when multiple families are reliant on the income from the operation.

Special Tax Preference Planning

The family farm and ranch has long had a special place in the American imagination and a special place in the tax code. Three important tax preferences can facilitate keeping the operation in the family: conservation easements, special use valuation, and alternative valuation date.

Conservation easements

Farm and ranch land is frequently subject to development pressure which can dramatically increase the fair market value of the land and corresponding property taxes.

Placing a conservation easement on the land permanently restricts the use of the land for agricultural purposes. This will reduce the current value of the land and associated real estate taxes and reduce future appreciation.

Special Use Valuation

The purpose of Internal Revenue Code §2032A (Section 2032A) is to allow farmland to be valued as farmland.

Section 2032A permits farmland to be valued at its productive value in farming, rather than farmland's fair market value (if sold for its highest and best use).

When valuing farmland

at a lower cost, a significant amount of estate tax can be saved. In select situations, it is the difference between a farm remaining in the family or being sold to raise the cash necessary to pay estate taxes.

Special land use Section 2032A is generally misunderstood. It is widely perceived as easy, uncomplicated, and the primary method of solving farm estate planning problems.

Unfortunately, that perception often is based on a lack of accurate information concerning the complexities of how Section 2032A works, and of its true advantages and disadvantages.

First, it is critical that the decedent have materially participated in the farm or closely held business to use special-use valuation.

The law also requires that property inherited by special-use valuation be used for a qualified purpose by a qualifying heir for a minimum of 10 years. A qualified use means:

- The property is used as a farm for farming purposes; or
- The property is used in a trade or business other than farming.

The term trade or business applies only to an active business such as manufacturing, mercantile or service enterprise, or to the raising of agricultural or horticultural commodities.

If such tests regarding the material participation and qualified use of a qualified family member are not maintained, additional estate tax and penalties may apply.

Alternative Valuation Date

The purpose of alternate valuation is to reduce the tax liability if the total value of the estate's property has decreased since the date of the decedent's death.

Alternative valuation applies to all the property in the estate. It cannot be used for only part of the property, as is the case with special-use valuation.

However, the personal representative may choose alternate valuation and use special-use valuation also for qualified real property. The choice must be made on the first estate tax return filed for the estate.

Liquidity, taxes, and estate administration

An overriding concern for preservation of the farm operation upon the death of the senior operator is protection from fragmentation (forced sale) through the following:

- Excessive estate taxes;
 - Excessive debt service cost;
 - Operational competence of the legatee; or
 - Division of the estate among family members.
- Asset liquidity within the estate or liquidity that can be created at death may be a necessary component of the plan.

Many wills and living trusts contain tax formulas that may create unanticipated and unwanted results, especially in situations where the estate is not subject to estate tax. As the law continuously changes, operators need to review the impact of the new law upon their existing documents.



With more than 11 years of experience in the insurance and financial services industry, Erick works closely with his clients to help them with their asset protection and accumulation needs. Erick offers a range of consultative and technical case design services to support his clients by presenting estate, business, charitable, insurance, and retirement strategies.

Erick was born in Long Island, New York, attended high school in East Hampton, and went to college in New Haven, Connecticut. He enjoys spending time with his partner, Alicia, and their two cats and one dog. If Erick is not in the office or with his family, you may find him on the golf course or out for a run in the neighborhood.

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