

SPEAK OUT!

What's Coming Down the Road?

by Susan Wall, IAW President



Hello fellow members of Illinois Agri-Women! I am your new president, Susan Wall.

It is both an honor and delight for me to hold this position. I want to do my best to work with all of you to make our organization the best it can be while continuing our goal of "promoting a better un-

derstanding of agriculture and the family farm system".

I took office on February 26th at our annual meeting. We had a really good day in spite of the snow that threatened to spoil our fun. Then a week later on March 5, I attended the Illinois Ag Legislative Day at the Capital. From there I went to The Women Changing the Face of Agriculture conference at ISU, Normal, Illinois on March 6. I had the privilege to welcome nearly 1200 people attending the event! I also enjoyed completing a radio interview with Gale Cunningham of WYXY 99.1, FM radio while I was there. It was a busy time, but I enjoyed it all.

In my new role, I have also been busy appointing new Regional Coordinators: Nikki Keltner- North West; Ruth Hambleton-South; Karen Blatter-Central; and Krista Lottinville-East. I am asking that each region host at least one meeting this year. In our manual it has a section describing what the regions can do. I plan to attend these meetings so I can meet you all. I hope it can be a time of members meeting each other in their area and perhaps feeling connected to IAW. After all, you members are what makes IAW an organization. You are all so talented and committed to agriculture and it's way of life. Our resources are endless!

Dates to Remember

2015

Apr. 16 IAW Board Meeting
Conf. Call 9:00 a.m.

June 7-10 AAW Fly-In
Washington, D.C.

June 10 ILFB Legis. Roundtable
Bloomington, IL

July 16 IAW Board Meeting
Conf. Call 9:00 a.m.

Aug. 18 Ag Day
Illinois State Fair

Sept. 1-3 Farm Progress Show
Decatur, IL

Nov. 6-9 AAW Convention
Portland, Maine

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If you ever wish to get in touch with me please call me at 217-272-4485 or e-mail me at susan-wall@frontiernet.net.

Spring is here! Warm sunshine, baby calves, short sleeved shirts ,hunting mushrooms, kids playing, and planting gardens and fields. I just love to see the almost florescent green color of the trees when fully clothed in Spring. I love the smell of fresh dirt and grass growing. We farmers will be getting busy in a little while, but make sure you take time to absorb the beauty all around you and share it with someone you love!



Announcing Illinois Agri Women Activities and Meetings in 2015

April 16	9:00am	Board Meeting Conference Call*
June 10	TBA	IFB Legislative Roundtable and Board Meeting
July 16	9:00 am	Board Meeting Conference Call*
August 18	TBA	State Fair Ag Day and Ag Awards Dinner Possible Board Meeting
September 1, 2, & 3		Farm Progress Show, Decatur <i>Possible Board Meeting</i>

Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed.

* For conference call information, contact Karen Westbrook at westbrook.karen@comcast.net one week prior to the meeting.

2015 IAW Memberships Dues

New Member / Renewal

____ I would like to renew my IAW membership
Dues \$50 per year, including IAW/AAW newsletters.

____ I would like to join IAW.
Dues \$50 per year, including IAW/AAW newsletters.

Name _____

Spouse _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ County _____

Ph _____ Email _____

Annual dues of \$50.00 are due March 1, 2015 to be current. Our organization needs your support, both physically and financially, to meet our goals and promote agriculture in Illinois. Please send your check and complete form to Jennifer Waters.

Send to:
Jennifer Waters
4974 Robinson Rd
Pleasant Plains, IL 62677
Membership renewals are due each March. If you have not yet renewed please remit today!

'LET IT SNOW!'*by Linda Swiercinsky, IAW Past President*

"The weather outside was dreadful" but 20 hardy souls made it to our 40th anniversary annual meeting at the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) in Springfield, Feb. 26.

IDOA staff were superb hosts - in particular Karen Fraase, who ran to the auditorium and lugged back to the FFA room a flagpole that was taller than she was for the "Pledge of Allegiance". IDOA employees also supported our "Go Girl" silent auction, bringing the auction total to \$532. Many thanks to Pam Ratterman, IDOA receptionist, who watched the silent auction table and answered questions from employees who considered bidding.

Leading off the program were the dynamic duo from FSA

state office, Stan Wilson and Rick Graden, who spoke on the new farm bill deadlines, micro-loans, and other available FSA programs. They were introduced by Shirley Bartelt, who worked closely with Rick when he was CEO in Ogle County (for more than half his career). Stan and Rick also visited with other IAW members over a delicious buffet lunch that was catered in.

During the lunch period Mark Schleusener, Illinois State Statistician, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA, pointed out the importance of filling out the farm census reports and reminded us that women landlords are on the increase.

Caitlin Justice, representing the Springfield Convention & Visitor Bureau, encouraged IAW and Women Changing the Face of

Agriculture to consider Springfield as a future meeting site. She distributed recipe cards for the Horseshoe sandwiches that Springfield is known for.

The president recognized some of the IAW members who she said made her job easier: Shirley Bartelt, Ruth Hambleton, Penny Lauritzen, Heather Hampton+Knodle, Diana Ropp, Martha Blum, Anne Hampton, Beverly Coffman, Jennifer Waters, Denise Smith, Marla Behrends, Susie Wall, Karen Westbrook, Mary Meinhart, Eleanor Zimmerlein, Susan Dodsworth, Joyce Morrison, Cheryl Day, Pat Yeagle, and Sandy Carpenter.

Brand new Director of Agriculture

Continued on page 5

Meet the Board IAW

The IAW Annual Meeting was held on February 26, 2015. As a result of action taken at the meeting, the following are the 2015 - 2016 Officers for the organization:

President	Susan Wall, Sorento (Bond County)	2015-2017
Vice President	Denise Smith, Franklin (Montgomery County)	2015-2016
Vice President	Diana Ropp, Normal (McLean County)	2016-2017
Secretary	Karen Westbrook, Springfield (Sangamon County)	2014-2016
Treasurer	Mary Meinhart, Montrose (Jasper County)	2014- 2016
Past President	Linda Swiercinsky, Maquon (Knox County)	2015-2017

In addition, Diane Wohlers, Danvers (McLean County) will be serving on the Special Projects Committee for a 3-year term joining Julie LeSueur, Algonquin (McHenry/Kane) (2016) and Shirley Bartelt, Polo (Ogle County) (2017).

Look for new Regional Coordinators and Committee members in the next newsletter.

Illinois Agricultural Legislative Day*by Karen Westerbrook, IAW Secretary*

On March 5, President Susan Wall, Heather Hampton+Knodle, and I represented IAW at the IALD.

The morning began with the meet and greet session followed by introductions and presentations.

The Illinois Farm Bureau provided a synopsis of the bills the organizations identified as impacting agricultural. This year, they did not provide positions on the legislation as both Houses were scheduled for early recesses. Our very own Marla Behrends served as the emcee. Heather provided Susie

and me with an IAW position paper.

The two were able to talk with staff of Representative Kathleen Willis and Representative Camille Willy. We had an appointment with Senator Don Harmon, Senate President Pro Tem. He was delayed and unable to meet with us. We were able to leave a folder with his legislative assistant.

Susie and I met with her Representative who was very support of IAW and our issues. We left folders for Representatives Butler and Poe. Heather was able

to meet with her newly appointed Representative.

As an aside, my son's 4th grade class has introduced SB 800 through Representative McCann to make sweet corn the state vegetable.

We were able to briefly talk with Senator McCann about IAW and thank him for helping Brett's class. The IAW legislative issues paper is attached. The Illinois Farm Bureau Legislative Briefing is available upon request.

IAW Position Statement*written by Heather Hampton+Knodle*

Agriculture Education Line Item -Support \$1.8 M Current Funding up to \$3 M ISBE Request: This line item supports student and teacher work/career skill development and STEM curriculum and assessment development. Work-based learning projects of high school students earn more than \$11 Million Annually – that's a 611% return on the state's investment in agriculture education. The Agriculture Education line item is THE MODEL for the new STEM Pathways Initiative created by IL State Board of Education and the Illinois Business Roundtable.

Extension – Support County Match and Youth for University of Illinois Extension Restore funding in the budget: Extension plays many roles in rural communities: nutrition, family and financial education; community and economic development; horticulture; youth programming that ranges from at-risk youth to special interest 4-H clubs on robotics and other STEM areas. County government matches state funding to support this local programming. We respectfully request funding at FY15 levels.

IL and Mississippi River Navigation Locks and Dams Modernization - Support: Illinois Agri Women does not have a position on the proposed Illinois and Middle Mississippi River Public Private Partnership Pilot Program (IMMR P5), however, IAW has for more than a decade supported federal, state and private financial support – as well as political support - to maintain and to modernize this critical infrastructure.

Local Government Distributive Fund – Support HB365 Rural communities need their pre-2011 share of 10% of the state income tax to maintain operations: Due to smaller populations, these communities (including county government) do not have the sales tax, corporate tax or revenue from fees and fines required to fund services like law enforcement, roads and bridges and state-mandated functions. HB365 accelerates the return to almost 10% of income tax before 2020.

Realistic Jury Fees - Support SB59 Rural counties cannot afford the 2014 legislative requirement to pay jurors \$25 the first day and \$50 each additional day of required attendance.

Support the Livestock Management Facilities Act – IAW says “let it work.” No amen

Annual Meeting, continued

Philip Nelson addressed the group and confirmed that Governor Rauner has asked him to choose the new State Fair manager, which he hopes to do in the near future. In the past, he noted, the governor himself would have made the appointment but Governor Rauner is one who likes to delegate.

After lunch came the highlight of the day for many members. Lieutenant Governor Evelyn Sanguinetti came in for a conversation with us on things we liked from the past and programs that could be eliminated or changed. One of her main responsibilities is leading the Governor's Council on Rural Affairs and, since she lives in a suburb of Chicago, she is anxious to learn about our way of life in the country. How nice it is that she respects our opinions!

The Lt. Governor asked our impression of several previous programs. Discussion included a pro bono legal network for victims of domestic violence, the grocery store start-up guide, increasing the use of link cards at farmers markets, accessibility of a Rural Resource Guide, and benefits to small towns from the Main

Street program, which has been in place for many years to spiff up downtowns where small businesses are often closing. (I remember Jean and Calvin Iben-dahl served as judges for the Main Street program about 25 years ago.)

IAW members discussed rural development issues with the Lt. Governor. She referred to it as



the first of what she hopes will be many opportunities to identify priorities for rural communities.

A behind-the-scenes look at the Dairy Products building seemed appropriate for our visit to the State Fairgrounds. Since time was of the essence, Marla Behrends, manager of Illinois Industry Relations for the Midwest Dairy Association, compiled a slide presentation of the most popular "butter cows" over the years.

Marla explained that our butter cow in Illinois is always on display from 9:00 am until 9:00 pm every day. Vandalism by animal rights activists at the Iowa State Fair two years ago occurred because their butter cow was in a large viewing area with other commodity displays which were not secure.

One of the most sensitive issues that came up was the governor's budget to eliminate funding for vocational agriculture in Illinois. Although we agree wholeheartedly with the governor's plan to cut spending so that taxes do not rise, this seems to be aimed at eliminating the FFA programs that we all support.

I wish we could hear from the person(s) who want to zero out funding and tell us why they lump vocational agriculture with "cradle to career" funding and other big black holes that gobble up the money and have nothing to show for it.

In the business meeting Denise Smith was elected vice-president for a one year term and Susan Wall moved up to president. Karen Westbrook continues as secretary and Mary Meinhart as treasurer.

FARMLAND Documentary Available at Wal-Mart Stores *by Heather Hampton+Knodle*

March 3rd Academy Award®-winning filmmaker James Moll's feature-length documentary, FARMLAND, will be available on DVD beginning Tuesday, March 3rd, at Walmart and Walmart.com. The availability of the documentary at retail locations across the country and online, provides another opportunity for viewers to experience the film, which offers a firsthand glimpse inside the world of farming by showcasing the lives of six young farmers and ranchers in their twenties.

FARMLAND premiered in theaters across the country in spring 2014, and now, beginning March 3rd, is available on

hard disk for rent and purchase at Netflix, Amazon, select retail outlets and via On Demand platforms. DVDs of FARMLAND will be for sale at select Walmart locations and on Walmart.com beginning March 3rd for \$9.96.

The documentary is also now available to rent on DVD from Netflix and to purchase on Amazon, with continued availability for rent and purchase via digital download on iTunes, Amazon Instant Video, Blockbuster On-Demand, Sony PlayStation, Vudu.com, Xbox and YouTube.

During its theatrical debut in 2014, FARMLAND was shown

in more than 170 theaters across the country including Regal Cinemas, Marcus Theatres, Carmike Cinemas, Landmark Theatres, and many key independent theaters. The film was also featured at film festivals in Atlanta, Cleveland, Nashville and Newport Beach, Calif. Produced by Moll's Allentown Productions, FARMLAND was made with the generous support of the U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance®.

Check out the official trailer and more information about the feature length documentary at FARMLANDfilm.com and on Facebook

ILAP: Developing Skills for the Future

Illinois Agri-Women who are in the Illinois Agriculture Leadership Program, Class of 2016, participated in their National Seminar the week of March 8th.

The women are pictured here in front of the White House (left to right Katie Lyons, Julie Wankel, Karlie Elliot-Bowman, Jennifer Waters, Krista Lottinville, Brandy Marron, Jill Frueh, and Kimberly Meier).

Highlights of the trip include hearing from Large Animal Vet and current employee of the FBI Steven Goldsmith as he discussed bioterrorism, visiting the offices of Senator Durbin and

Senator Kirk, a reception with our counterparts of the California Ag Leadership Program, and touring the Pentagon. The class used any available free time to

form stronger friendships with each other.

Important topics discussed were locks and dams on the Mississippi River, Renewable Fuels Standard, Waters of the US, GMO Food Labeling, and the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade negotiations.

The whole class now has a better understanding of how policy is developed, shaped, influenced, and ultimately implemented.

Please take a look at their week's diary found on the ILAP Website:

www.agleadership.org



IL Agricultural Resource Annual Meeting

by Diana Ropp, IARC President

Ladies of IARC met 30 minutes prior to the Illinois Agri-Women annual meeting this past February.

We were pleased to Welcome Karen Blatter with 1st Farm Credit to the IARC Board for her first 2 year term. Karen has worked tirelessly with the WCFA project and continues to lend her technological expertise and creativity to this effort.

The following individuals have been renewed as officers: Beverly Coffman, Treasurer; Krista Lottinville, Secretary; Diana Ropp, President; and Cheryl Day, Vice President. Presently, we have several exciting agricultural promotion activities going on which IARC is pleased to be a part of.

The 6th Annual Women Changing the Face of Agriculture conference anticipated

806 young ladies registered to attend as of our annual meeting. Having this event at Illinois State University truly brings in the crowd due to the centralized location. However, it does increase expenses for the event.

We were happy to assist the Livingston County Ag Olympics with some funding for their 4-H Ag Olympics. The first annual Illinois Harvest Dinner will be held in a Livingston County field this fall. This will be an event showcasing Illinois farms and farming and is targeting food influencers in the Northern and Central Illinois area.

A similar event has been held in other parts of the country and the goal is to offer an opportunity to create positive dialogue among consumers and producers.

IAW has been asked to make a financial contribution as seed money to get this project rolling and will supply some woman

power the day of the event to assist in whatever capacity that may be needed.

ISU's Sigma Alpha Chapter has been very helpful with WCFA whether it is held in Normal or parts beyond. And we are happy to donate an abundant basket full of donated items to their upcoming auction in support of Ag in the Classroom on April 18.

As our meetings are typically held via conference call, it was a pleasure to hold our annual event at the Illinois Department of Agriculture building on the Illinois State Fairgrounds.

My sincere Thank You to all those involved with IARC as well as our ever growing and ever changing IAW; your time, talent, dedication and devotion to agriculture are truly appreciated!

Meet the Board IARC

Officers

President	Diana Ropp, Normal (McLean County), 2 nd term ending 2017
Vice President	Cheryl Day, Cerro Gordo (Macon County), 2 nd term ending 2017
Secretary	Krista Lottinville, Sheldon (Iroquois County), 2 nd term ending 2017
Treasurer	Beverly Coffman, Polo, (Ogle County), 2 nd term ending 2016
Director	Denise Smith, Franklin (Morgan County), 2 nd 2-year term
Director	Karen Blatter, Heyworth (McLean County), 1 st 2-year term
Director	Penny Lauritzen, Lanark (Carroll County), 2 nd 2-year term
Director	Emily Pratt, Dixon (Lee County), 2 nd term ending 2017
Director	Martha Blum, Waterman (DeKalb County), 2 nd term ending 2017
Director	Jennifer Waters, Pleasant Plains (Sangamon County), 1 st term ending 2017
Director	Heather Hampton+Knodle, Fillmore (Montgomery County), 1 st term ending 2017

Young Agri-Women Finding Their way

by Penny Lauritzen

Once again the young ladies of Illinois, who have an interest in agriculture, had an opportunity to meet the Ladies of IL Agri-Women and the agriculture, food and energy industry who support the "Women Changing the Face of Agriculture" career discovery project.

On March 6, 2015 the 883 students, FFA advisors, Girl Scout troop leaders, and chaperones converged on the IL State University Bone Student Center to meet the women that have broken with tradition. They are the women who currently have careers in non-traditional career tracks of agriculture, food and energy related businesses.

There were 70 companies involved with this effort in a wide variety of ways. Some participate in the career discovery fair in the morning (50 booths showcased the career opportunities that women currently fill), some provide financial sponsor-

ship to keep student registration low and provide transportation assistance when needed, some provide in-kind contributions such as tasty breakfast items and printing of nametags and table tents, and some provide assistance and leaders for the 30 breakout sessions.

The volunteers from many of the companies and IL Agri-Women that serve on the planning committee prepare for this event throughout the year with all the little details that it takes to put together such a large, successful event that has such a positive impact on the young ladies of Illinois.

The positive comments from the students make it all worthwhile:

"So many speakers, so many stories. I loved getting to know women from all parts of the ag world while hearing their stories and their challenges and successes."

"I learned a lot about ag finances and networking and everyday work days in the ag world."

"As a high school senior who is trying to make decisions for colleges and majors, I found this experience very helpful. I had the opportunity to be inspired by many women who supported majoring in ag com."

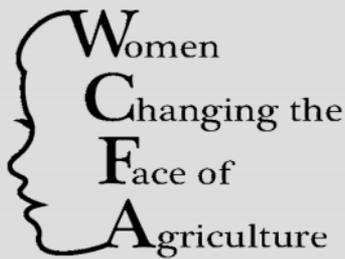
"I liked the career fair a lot. It gave me some options. I thought that I wanted to do criminology, but now I am not so sure. It gave me some ideas on what else I can do and enjoy."

"All of the ladies that I talked to were great and gave me a lot of different ways to think about my future. They all offered a lot of advice and said if I ever had questions, I could contact them. Thank you for this event!"

"Keep holding this conference, it means so much."

Thank you to all of the volunteers for their help that make the day such a success!!!





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Farm Week

Illinois Soybean Association

Monsanto

Prairie Farmer Magazine

Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE)

Topflight Grain Cooperative

USDA – Farm Service Agency

State Legislation

HB 141& HB 173: Strips cities and counties of the right to install cameras at intersections and school zones. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

SB 61: Places a 1% tax on diapers and baby wipes. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

HB 152: Requires the installation of carbon monoxide detectors in schools. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

HB 193: Moves the Illinois primary from February to June. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

HB 220: Allows residents of a fire protection district to hold a referendum on a “rescue tax”, a special rate created to fund emergency rescue crews and equipment. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

SB 11: The measure would boost the minimum wage from \$8.25 to \$9 on July 1 and increase it every year until reaching \$11 by 2019. *Source LaSalle News Tribune.*

HB 124: Increases the minimum wage to \$15 per hour, effective Oct 1, 2015. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

HB 109 and SB 48: Creates a Good Samaritan exemption to the Wildlife Code that prevents the taking of protected species. Filed in response to the Steve Patterson eaglets case in LaSalle County. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

SB 33: Adds post traumatic stress disorder to the list of eligible diseases available for treatment with medical cannabis. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

SB 44: Using a drone to fish is a misdemeanor carrying up to a year in jail. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

HB 218 and SB 753: Possession of cannabis less than 30 grams is a petty offense (not a misdemeanor) punishable by a fine of \$100. (If adopted, the law would double Chicago’s current 15-gram threshold.) *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

HB 245: Cities don’t have to go out for bids for jobs valued at \$50,000 and under. (Currently bids are required for jobs \$20,000.) *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

SB 729: A driver cannot smoke in a car when a minor is present, subject to fines up to \$100. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

HB 265: People may not buy or transport firearms after someone obtains an order of protection against them. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

HB 433and SB 803: Permits the use of silencers in hunting. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

HB 151 and 2474: The senior citizens assessment freeze homestead exemption is open to households earning up to \$60,000 (HB151) or up to \$75,000 (HB 2474). Currently the limit is \$55,000. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

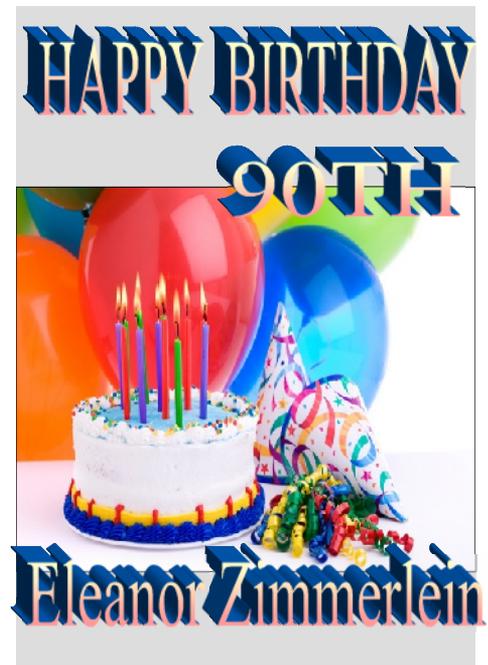
SB 114 and HB 2536: High school students can be excused from PE if they’re enrolled in 2 or more Advanced Placement courses. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

Executive Order: Gov. Bruce Rauner issued an executive order directing state agencies to stop taking so-called “fair share” union fees from state workers who have chosen not to join a union. *Source Illinois Policy.*

Gov. Bruce Rauner included in his budget proposal:

- \$1.5 billion cut in Medicaid
- \$600 million cut in local government
- \$387 million cut in higher education
- \$300 million increase for elementary and secondary education
- \$500 million for backlog of unpaid bills

Source FarmWeek



Federal Legislation

H.R. 317: Grants statehood to Washington, D.C., which would become the 51st state and be called “New Columbia.” *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

H.R. 5851: Transfers the Veterans Day Holiday from Nov. 11 to Election Day, enabling them to vote on a federal holiday. *Source LaSalle News Tribune.*

H.R. 5893: The Ansel Adams Act eases restrictions on photography in America’s national parks. Park officials no longer can seize camera equipment or charge fees for photography. *Source LaSalle News Tribune*

S. 299 and H.R.634: Lifts travel restrictions between the United States and Cuba.

Source LaSalle News Tribune

H.R. 1105: Death Tax Repeal Act. *Source Working The Hill.*

FOID: Illinois State Police are merging FOID and concealed carry license (CCL) application processes. The new FOID application will be available through the department’s website and through the paper alternative call center method for those who do not have computer access.

Minors under the age of 21 without an Illinois driver’s license or identification card and Amish applicants will be required to complete an alternative call-in paper application.

Federal firearm licensed (FFLs) dealers will also have access to the web-based portal in order to

conduct the required background checks of those wishing to purchase a firearm. *Source Bureau County Republican*

Pension: Rep. Ron DeSantis (R-FL) has introduced the End Pensions in Congress Act, which would end pensions for all future lawmakers and those not yet vested into the congressional plan.

According to the Congressional Research Service, lawmakers are eligible for a pension at age 62 if they’ve completed at least 5 years of service, or at age 50 if they have completed 20 years of service, or at any age after completing 25 years of service, not to exceed 80% of their final salaries, which currently stand at \$117,000 a year. *Source The Washington Times*

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 Western Farm Business Farm Management
 Parkland Community College Carthage Veterinary Service
 Illinois Agricultural Leadership Program Illinois Certified Crop Advisor Program
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Student Sponsorship: Syngenta, Great Lakes Hybrids, One Earth Energy, North Central Bank, USDA - Natural Resource Conservation Service, American Water, McLean County Timeless Clovers, Blaine's Farm & Fleet, The Andersons, Bates Commodities, Farm First Dairy, FarmHer, National FFA Foundation, Northern Partners Cooperative, Nutrients for Life Foundation, USDA - Rural Development, Western Farm Business Farm Management, Parkland Community College, Carthage Veterinary Service, Illinois Agricultural Leadership Program, Illinois Certified Crop Advisor Program, Kent Precision Foods, Maurer-Stutz, Inc., University of Illinois, RFD Radio, WSMI Radio

SPEAK OUT!

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