



Farm Bureau awards top legislative award to U.S. Representative Lucas

U.S. Rep. Frank Lucas, R-OK, received American Farm Bureau's Golden Plow Award Feb. 18, during the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Leadership Conference at the Skirvin Hotel, Oklahoma City.

The Golden Plow award is presented annually to one member of the U.S. Senate and one member of the U.S. House of Representatives who have demonstrated strong support for Farm Bureau and agricultural issues.

"As chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, Lucas has worked tirelessly for agriculture and the state of Oklahoma," said OFB President Mike Spradling. "His work on the new farm bill, combined with his many years of service to Oklahoma, makes him a deserving recipient of AFBF's top

legislative award."

Representative Lucas is a fifth generation Oklahoman whose family has lived and farmed in the state for more than 100 years. He was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1994 and is currently serving his 11th term. Representing Oklahoma's third district, which



(See Lucas, page 3) U.S. Rep. Frank Lucas (left) accepts the Golden Plow Award from AFBF President Bob Stallman.

OFB members celebrate National Food Check-Out Week

The OFB Leadership Team (formerly the Women's Committee) participated in National Food Check-Out Week, Feb. 17-23, by donating \$3,000 worth of food and gift certificates to the Ronald McDonald House Charities in Tulsa and Oklahoma City.

Additionally, Oklahoma Farm Bureau members worked to educate consumers in their communities by offering tips on how consumers can stretch their grocery dollars with healthy, nutritious food, and many farm-

ers and ranchers also made a special effort to reach out to consumers, in-person or through social media, to answer questions about the food they grow or the livestock and poultry they raise.

"Oklahoma's farmers and ranchers share a common concern with consumers when it comes to putting nutritious meals on the table while sticking to a tight budget," said Kitty Beavers, Duncan, chairman of the OFB Leadership Team.

Now in its 15th year, Food Check-Out Week also highlights America's safe, abundant and affordable food supply, made possible largely by America's productive farmers and ranchers. According to the most recent information from the USDA's Economic Research Service, American families and individuals spend, on average, less than 10 percent of their disposable personal income for food.



LEFT – OFB Leadership Team members Lena Henson (left) and Beverly Delmedico shop for groceries at a Tulsa Reasor's store, Feb. 20.

RIGHT – OFB Leadership Team Chairman Kitty Beavers and Director of OFB Leadership Team Programs Marcia Irvin (right) present food to Susan Adams and Shari Harrell of the Oklahoma City Ronald McDonald House, Feb. 28.



MEMBER BENEFITS

• **HughesNet** – Offers members who are new customers a \$99 instant credit at the time of a new HughesNet account activation. Have your I.D. # ready and call 1-866-556-9661.

OFB highlights a benefit in each issue of *Perspective* as a reminder of the savings available to OFB members. Find a complete list of savings online at okfarmbureau.org.

OFB CALENDAR

Oklahoma Youth Expo

March 16-26 • OKC

Contact: Chris Kidd, (405) 523-2402

YF&R Legislative Day

March 19 • OKC

Contact: Holly Carroll, (405) 301-6610

Ag Day at the Capitol

April 4 • OKC

Contact: Karolyn Bolay, (405) 523-2320

OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU

Legislative Update

By John Collison

OFB Vice President of Public Policy and Media Relations

We have all seen the commercials on TV of the puppy dogs with sad eyes, or the cat that looks like it's been through the ringer. In the background plays the song "In the Arms of an Angel" by Sarah McLaughlin. These images are put there to make us feel sad and guilty and that it is our duty to send money to the HSUS (Humane Society of the United States) or PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) or one of the million other animal rescue agencies. Most times, if you're like me, you just turn the channel and pretend that those are some far away fanatical groups that won't have any effect on Oklahoma. Well, I'm sorry to report these very groups that want to save the puppies also want to save your farm animals.

We are seeing an increase in the activity by the animal rights groups in the state of

Oklahoma. We are also seeing targeted campaign propaganda that will affect the way you live and work. PETA recently showed up on the Oklahoma State University campus to protest eating animals. In downtown Oklahoma City activists show up as naked chickens to fight for the plight of our feathered friends. HSUS is at our state Capitol telling us it is wrong to find a purpose for horses when they have reached their useful end. In the first few weeks at the Capitol, the legislative assistants have been beseeched by out-of-state calls berating us for our actions to enhance our agricultural industry. I encourage you to call your legislator and let your voice be heard on issues that affect your way of life.

It is easy to dismiss these groups as radical or ineffective – but let me warn you – they are very effective. These groups raise millions of dollars to fund ad campaigns that target you and your way of life. This money is used to try to put you out of business. These dollars flow in from unsuspecting people who think they are saving a dog or a cat. Ladies and gentlemen, we are under attack! One thing I have learned over the years is that we can never give an inch with these groups. For most people who participate with these groups, it has become a religion and a way of life. Farm Bureau has a bill at the Capitol that will try to help in this battle. It is called The Freedom to Farm Act. The Freedom to Farm Act makes it a constitutional right to farm and ranch in the state of Oklahoma using modern agriculture practices. The Freedom to Farm legislation will protect your way of doing business as long as the constitution of Oklahoma remains in place.

This is not a battle that will end soon; rather it will be a war. A war against the way we live and work. A war against our lifestyle and the traditions we know and love. The other side will not back down from this battle anytime soon.

The question is ... will you?

Oklahoma Farm Bureau Online

The screenshot shows the Oklahoma Farm Bureau website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, ABOUT, NEWS, COUNTIES, MEMBERSHIP, and PROGRAMS. Below the navigation bar is a large photo of a family (a woman, two children, and a man) standing in front of a green tractor. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- NEWS:** Features articles such as "Farm Bureau Partners with Governor's Food Drive" (dated 10/26/12), "Oklahoma Farm Bureau is proud participant in the National Day to End Animal Hoarding" (dated 10/26/12), and "Farmers work to stop the flow of horse hoarders" (dated 10/26/12).
- CALENDAR:** Lists upcoming events like "State FFW Convention Meeting" (October 21-23, 2012), "Horse Hoarding Committee Meeting" (October 24, 2012), and "OFB Annual Meeting" (November 21-23, 2012).
- FOUNDATIONS:** Includes information about the "Oklahoma Farm Bureau Annual Meeting Information" and the "Oklahoma Farm Bureau's 73rd Annual Meeting" scheduled for November 9-11, 2012.
- Other sections:** "MORE FROM FARM BUREAU" with sub-sections like "YF&R Committee from State Fair Livestock Judging Contest", "Oklahoma Farm Bureau Harvest Watch blog", and "Livestock producers help feed hungry children". There are also promotional banners for "HARVEST WATCH" and "Beef for Backpacks".

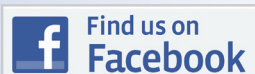
Monitor the latest Farm Bureau and agricultural news and information online at okfarmbureau.org.

Currently online:

• **Agricultural News** – Oklahoma Farm Bureau features a new agriculture-related story every day on its site. Read about both AFBF and state Farm Bureau news by visiting the homepage.

• **Legislative Update** – The Oklahoma State Legislature is in full swing. See the OFB homepage for a link to the public policy division's latest legislative update and bill tracking site.

www.okfarmbureau.org



OFB honors longtime leader

Oklahoma Farm Bureau honored Billy Gibson, Ada, Feb. 18, for his more than 36 years of service as a volunteer leader for the farm organization.

"Billy is a very special person who has dedicated many years to serving Oklahoma Farm Bureau, including two separate tenures on the OFB Board of Directors, representing District 8," said OFB President Mike Spradling.

Gibson was raised on a ranch near Ada in Pontotoc County. He served his country as an Air Force pilot, flying combat missions over Vietnam and later serving in the Pentagon.

Upon retirement from the Air Force, the Oklahoma farm boy felt the pull from the Oklahoma prairie and returned to the family ranch where he has spent the last 38 years.

During that time, Gibson believed it was important to work as a volunteer Farm Bureau leader at the county, state and national levels.

"This honor means a lot to me and my family, especially my children and grandchildren," Gibson said. "I have always believed in the Farm Bureau mission to improve the

lives of rural Oklahomans."

In January at the AFBF convention in Nashville, Billy and his wife Janet were interviewed by Story Corps, affiliated with National Public Radio and the national archives in the Library of Congress. They were just one of a handful of farm families from around the country chosen to have their life story preserved for eternity.

"This is only way to get the whole story told. Reach out there and give it to the world like it is," Gibson said.

The Gibsons have two children, six grandchildren and three great grandchildren.



Billy Gibson

(Lucas, from page 1)

comprises 32 counties in western and northern Oklahoma, Lucas is well aware of the major rural and agricultural issues.

"I am honored and pleased to accept this award," Lucas said. "Throughout my service in Congress, I have worked hard to be a strong voice for American agriculture because I know how important it is to our state and nation. I have experienced firsthand the devastating effects of drought and appreciate the many challenges farmers endure to make certain we have a stable food and fiber supply. I will continue to work to maintain our investment in rural America and ensure that farm policy is not one of the challenges farmers face."

In addition to his duties as chairman of the agriculture committee, Lucas serves on the House committee on financial services and the committee on science, space and technology.

Prior to his service in Congress, Lucas served five and half years in the Oklahoma State House of Representatives.

YF&R plans 2013 leadership conference

OFB Young Farmers and Ranchers are encouraged to register now for the 2013 YF&R Leadership Conference, April 4-7, in Yukon. The four-day conference will include tours of Lopez Foods, Express Ranch facilities and the recently opened Devon Tower, as well as leadership building and networking opportunities.

Attendees will have the option to go to the National Circuit Finals Rodeo and OYE benefit concert featuring Thompson Square on Friday evening. Tickets are \$20 per person.

The registration form and a complete schedule are available online at www.okfarmbureau.org on the YF&R page. The registration deadline is March 31.

Hotel rooms are available at the Holiday Inn Express in Yukon and must be reserved before March 14 to obtain the group rate. Call (405) 494-7171 to make a reservation.

For more information about the conference, contact Holly Carroll at (405) 301-6610 or holly.carroll@okfb.com, and don't forget to follow YF&R on Facebook for the latest updates and giveaways for the conference.

Leadership conference highlights



LEFT – Bart Fischer, chief economist of the U.S. House Agriculture Committee, gave OFB members a status update on the new farm bill during one of the breakout sessions at the annual leadership conference.

RIGHT – Oklahoma FFA President Brandon Baumgarten encourages OFB members to keep fighting for agriculture during the opening session of 2013 OFB Leadership Conference, Feb. 18, in Oklahoma City.



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Spring deadline reminders

Commodity Tour Registration

A waiting list has been created for members still wishing to participate in the 2013 OFB Commodity Tour, March 25-27, in southeast Oklahoma. Contact Kelli Beall at (405) 523-2470 or kelli.beall@okfb.org to add your name to the list. You can find a complete agenda for the event at www.okfarmbureau.org.

Congressional Action Tour Registration

There is still time to register for the 2013 OFB Congressional Action Tour, April 14-18. The deadline is **March 11**. More information and registration forms are available on the OFB website at www.okfarmbureau.org or contact the OFB Public Policy Division at (405) 530-2681.

YF&R Video Contest

Oklahoma high school FFA and 4-H members are encouraged to produce creative videos promoting farmers' care for animals, consumers and the environment. The deadline for submissions is **March 15**. Find a complete set of rules and the application online at www.okfarmbureau.org on the YF&R page or contact Holly Carroll at (405) 301-6610 or holly.carroll@okfb.com for more information.

YF&R Scholarship

The deadline for YF&R Scholarship applications is quickly approaching. Apps must be postmarked by **April 1**. Visit www.okfarmbureau.org and click on Programs to find a PDF application.

OACD annual meeting



Rogers County Farm Bureau board member Joe Parker (right) receives a plaque for his service as president of the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts from incoming president Kim Farber, of Drummond. Parker was recognized during the OACD annual meeting Feb. 25, in Midwest City.

County leaders meet with legislators



LEFT – Pontotoc County Farm Bureau leaders visit with Sen. Susan Paddock during a trip to the state Capitol, Feb. 27. Members also met with Rep. Todd Thomsen during the trip.

RIGHT – Rep. Todd Russ (left), Sen. Tom Ivester (center) and OFB Vice President of Public Policy and Media Relations John Collison address Beckham County Farm Bureau members during the county's legislative dinner in Sayre, Feb. 28.

