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OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU

Perspective

December 9, 2016

Oklahoma Farm Bureau announces inaugural members of OKFB Caucus

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau is excited to welcome the inaugural members of its OKFB Caucus.

Comprised of Farm Bureau members in the state legislature, the OKFB Caucus is a non-partisan group created to foster fellowship and discussion of agricultural and rural policy issues.

“As Oklahoma continually becomes more urban and less rural, it’s important for those who value agriculture and the rural way of life to join forces,” said Tom Buchanan,

OKFB president. “This group is designed to ensure farmers and ranchers, and rural Oklahoma, continues to thrive into the future.”

The inaugural members are listed below. An asterisk (*) denotes newly-elected legislators.

State House: Rep. Scott Biggs, Rep. Chad Caldwell, Rep. Dennis Casey, Rep. Bobby Cleveland, Rep. Jeff Coody, Rep. John Enns, Rep. Scott Fetgatter*, Rep. Tommy Hardin, Rep. Chuck Hoskin, Rep. Steve Kouplen,

Rep. Mark Lawson*, Rep. Ben Loring, Rep. John Michael Montgomery, Rep. Charles Ortega, Rep. John Pfeiffer, Rep. Brian Renegar, Rep. Mike Ritze, Rep. Johnny Tadlock, Rep. Steve Vaughn, and Rep. Rick West*.

State Senate: Sen. Mark Allen, Sen. Larry Boggs, Sen. Chris Kidd*, Sen. Kim David, Sen. Eddie Fields, Sen. Greg McCortney*, Sen. Lonnie Paxton*, Sen. Roland Pederson*, Sen. Dewayne Pemberton*, Sen. Mike Schulz, and Sen. Joseph Silk.

4-H Foundation announces Senator Ron Justice 4-H Presidential Inauguration Endowment

The Oklahoma 4-H Foundation recently announced the Senator Ron Justice 4-H Presidential Inauguration Endowment, named after Sen. Ron Justice, a longtime friend to agriculture and to the Oklahoma Farm Bureau.

This new fund will allow for Oklahoma 4-H members who are selected through a competitive process to attend Presidential Inaugurations and leadership development activities in Washington D.C.

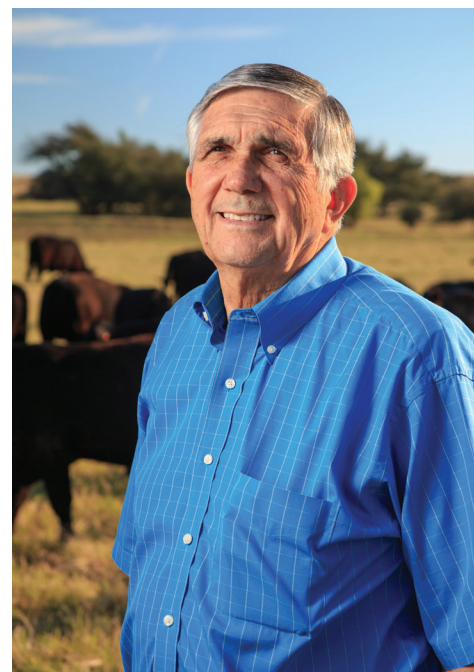
The Oklahoma 4-H Foundation Board felt it fitting to name this endowment in honor of Sen. Ron Justice and approved matching funds for this endowment at the November 8, 2016, board meeting. Justice spent 33 years in extension helping to make life better for Oklahoma farmers and ranchers and especially for Oklahoma 4-H members. Justice was elected to the State Senate 12 years ago and has been an unwavering advocate for 4-H members and extension in Oklahoma. He was also recently recognized by the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at Oklahoma State University as a 2016 Distinguished Alumni. Justice has been awarded the OKFB Champion Award in 2013, 2014, and 2015, in addition to being a member of the 100

Percent Club.

“Sen. Ron Justice has been a true public servant and champion for the Oklahoma 4-H program,” said Oklahoma 4-H Foundation President Jan Kunze. “We could not be more thrilled about this opportunity to recognize Sen. Justice for his decades of service.”

The 4-H Presidential Inauguration Trip is a special session of the Citizenship Washington Focus trip and is open to 4-H’ers ages 14-19. The goal of the trip is for Oklahoma 4-H members to learn the meaning and importance of the democratic process as well as explore the history of the Presidency, the election process, and the role of the press. Oklahoma 4-H members will discover the intricacies of the executive branch and careers in politics and practice individual roles in citizenship through service, civic education, and engagement. While on the trip, Oklahoma 4-H members will visit memorials, historical sites and museums and experience the Inauguration Day and related events.

Those wishing to contribute to the Senator Ron Justice 4-H Presidential Inauguration Endowment can contact the 4-H Foundation Executive Director Blayne



The endowment is named in honor of Sen. Ron Justice, who spent 33 years in extension and 12 years in the Oklahoma Senate.

Arthur at 405-834-3636 or blayne.arthur@okstate.edu. To learn more about the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation or donate online go to 4h.okstate.edu/Foundation.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau women donate meals to students during the Oklahoma State Capitol Trees Decoration

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee provided meals to second-graders from Orvis Risner Elementary School who participated in the annual Oklahoma State Capitol Trees Decoration Nov. 29.

The event invited 26 selected classes from across the state to participate in several activities, including tree decorating, photos with Gov. Mary Fallin and State School Superintendent Joy Hofmeister, a visit from Santa Claus, treats, storybook reading, musical entertainment, and the lighting of the Capitol Christmas Tree.

The OKFB WLC provided lunchables and other snacks for the second-grade class from Orvis Risner Elementary School in Edmond.

"It was greatly appreciated," said Debra Deskin, the second-grade teacher at Orvis Risner Elementary School, when asked about the WLC's donation. "It is a long day for a bunch of 7-year-olds to be out here at the Capitol, so we really appreciate their generosity."

The class chose to decorate their tree using the theme "Down on the Farm." Deskin said they used resources from Ag

in the Classroom to make some of the farm-related ornaments, such as salt dough tractors and sheep made from show curtain rings and fuzzy yarn.

This donation is part of the WLC's Our Food Link activities for the year, which seeks to connect consumers with the food Oklahoma farmers and ranchers grow and raise. The year-long program is used by county and state Farm Bureaus across the nation to reach consumers of all ages and backgrounds with information about today's agriculture.



Left: Orvis Risner Elementary School second-graders participated in the annual Oklahoma State Capitol Trees Decoration Nov. 29 in Oklahoma City, where the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee provided their meals. Upper right: Margaret Ann Kinder of Cotton County, WLC District 4, hands out lunchables to students. Bottom right: Second-graders enjoy their meal just before the lighting of the Capitol Christmas Tree.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau Online



Convention photos available

Photos from the OKFB Annual Meeting have been uploaded to the OKFB Flickr page. From award winners to candid shots of members, the weekend has been captured and posted for you to see. To view, download, print and/or share the photos, go to [flickr.com/photos/okfarmbureau](https://www.flickr.com/photos/okfarmbureau).



AFBF Convention right around the corner

The American Farm Bureau Federation's Annual Convention and IDEAg Trade Show is only a few weeks away! Keep up-to-date on news and events from the convention on our website at okfarmbureau.org. To register for the convention or for more information, visit annualconvention.fb.org.



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Oklahoma Farm Bureau helps members combat rising healthcare costs

As healthcare costs continue to skyrocket, our farm families are looking for every opportunity to offset these rising costs. To better serve you and bring increased value to your membership, the Oklahoma Farm Bureau recently partnered with Total Administrative Service Corporation (TASC), who specializes in creating tax deductible savings for healthcare insurance and out of pocket medical expenses.

TASC is a nationally recognized company and the largest privately held third-party benefits administrator. For over 40 years, TASC has been helping farm families keep more money in their pockets and give less to the IRS. In 2015, the average tax savings was over \$5000. The company is headquartered in Madison, Wisconsin, with regional offices throughout the United States. TASC does have a regional office in Oklahoma City, which covers the state of Oklahoma.

Healthcare Costs are Rapidly Rising

Everyone feels the pain of the rising cost of medical expenses. Consider these startling facts: According to The Kaiser Family

Foundation's Employer Health Benefits Annual Survey, in 2014 the average annual insurance premium for family coverage was \$16,834; it was \$9,950 in 2004. That's a 69% jump in premium expenses in just over 10 years!

Another survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation uncovered these startling facts: One in five families said that over the previous 12-month period they'd experienced serious financial problems due to family medical bills; 27% put off or postponed getting medical care they needed; and 34% reported skipping dental care or checkups.

TASC has solutions:

AgriPlan HRA Plan

AgriPlan Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRAs) save substantial tax dollars annually by allowing family farmers to deduct 100 percent of their family's health insurance premiums (including health, dental, vision, long term care and disability) and almost all out-of-pocket medical expenses. Insurance is deductible whether

it is from a major carrier, Obama Care or even Medicare. AgriPlan helps ensure that all IRS requirements are met and we offer a 100% audit guarantee (which your Accountant will appreciate). The average savings for this type of plan is over \$5,000 a year!

If you currently spend \$5000 or more on healthcare insurance and out of pocket medical expenses, you should look into AgriPlan. This plan is for married couples, unless your only employees are family members.

Call TASC's toll-free hotline at 855-591-0562 today! A TASC Microbusiness Specialist will answer all your questions about your eligibility and advise you on how to move forward. Or email microbusiness@tasconline.com for more information on how this program can work for you.

If you prefer, you might have your tax professional contact Peter LaTona, Regional Sales Director for Oklahoma. To schedule a call, email peter.latona@tasconline.com.

New vision benefit available for Farm Bureau members

Looking for a vision plan that provides outstanding benefits, a large network of Oklahoma independent eye care doctors, unlimited eye exams, both eyeglasses and contact lens provided at wholesale cost, and very affordable premiums?

Primary Vision Care Services (PVCS) is a 24 year old Oklahoma based vision care benefit company with over 350 network providers in Oklahoma. PVCS offers the highest quality benefit available including

eye exams with no copay when needed, not just once every year or two. PVCS is the only company in the industry that offers care when you need it. Eyeglasses are covered with a wholesale cost copay for as many pairs as desired, not just one pair. Contact lenses are also covered at wholesale cost plus a small fitting fee. You can get glasses AND contacts, not just one or the other.

Getting everything you need in basic

eye care is the PVCS vision benefit. PVCS is well respected within the vision care industry. Enrollment is limited to now through January 15, 2017, for the 2017 year. You can access enrollment via the PVCS -Farm Bureau enrollment link: <https://www.pvcs-usa.com/okfb/> or through the Farm Bureau website in health benefits and using the PVCS link. The Home Office telephone number for PVCS is 580-357-6912 and Fax 580-357-6919.

Member Benefits

Use your Polaris member benefit while you can!

Thinking about a end-of-the-year purchase from Polaris? OKFB members can receive up to a \$300 per unit discount on Polaris vehicles. However, this member benefit will expire at the end of December, so be sure to make your purchases now!

www.okfarmbureau.org/benefits

Calendar

AFBF Annual Convention & IDEAg Trade Show

January 6-11 • Phoenix, Arizona
Contact: Melisa Neal (405) 523-2475

State Legislature Convenes

February 6 • Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Contact: John Collison (405) 523-2539

2017 FUSION Conference

February 10-13 • Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Contact: Brittany Mikles (405) 523-2307

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Perspective, P.O. B. 53332, OKC, OK 73152-3332

STAFF DIRECTORY

Executive Director
Monica Wilke 405-523-2303

VP of Strategic Corporate Communications
Becky Samples 405-523-2528

VP of Public Policy
John Collison 405-523-2539

Director of Corporate Communications
Dustin Mielke 405-530-2640

Director of Public Policy Communications
Hannah Nemecek 405-523-2346

Communication Specialist
Clarissa Walton 405-523-2530

Brand Specialist
Jeff Canton 405-523-2465

Oklahoma Farm Bureau
2501 N. Stiles
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3126

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Right to Farm was right for Oklahoma, AG Pruitt says

From OKAgPolicy

Though State Question 777, the Right to Farm, was rejected by Oklahoma voters, Attorney General Scott Pruitt – speaking Friday at the 2016 Oklahoma Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in Oklahoma City – applauded farmers and ranchers for standing up for themselves.

“It was right to take the risk,” Pruitt said. “It was right to advance (SQ 777) because there are out-of-state interests that try to come in and dictate farming and ranching practices that we need to be on guard against.”

SQ 777 was a proposed amendment to the Oklahoma Constitution on the Nov. 8 ballot that would have granted farmers and ranchers rights to use agricultural technology, livestock procedures and ranching practices.

“This was an effort – a justifiable effort – for farmers and ranchers across the state of Oklahoma to say, ‘We’re going to protect ourselves, inoculate ourselves against that type of approach by out-of-state interests,’” Pruitt said. “Unfortunately, it was mischaracterized by opponents.”

Oklahoma farmers and ranchers, along with legislators, now must be on guard against the attacks of these groups, Pruitt said.

“There’s not a clear and present threat that I know of today, I think this was just simply, ‘We want to protect ourselves into the future,’” Pruitt said. “I think we just have to be vigilant in watching to make sure that those folks don’t come in and try to achieve that.”



Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt speaks to Oklahoma Farm Bureau members during the opening session of the 2016 OKFB Annual Meeting Nov. 11, 2016, in Oklahoma City.

The attorney general has firsthand experience guarding against out-of-state interests like the animal rights group Humane Society of the United States. In 2015, Pruitt was sued by HSUS for investigating the organization’s fundraising tactics following the 2013 Moore tornado.

“There are some 501(c)(3) entities that sometimes are charitable in nature, but they act more like a policy arm, like a 501(c)(4), which is the educational part of the tax code,” Pruitt said. “(I’ve been) monitoring that to make sure the monies Oklahomans give to those organizations are actually used for the purposes of charity and the mission of the 501(c)(3), as opposed to maybe advo-

cacy or political advocacy.”

Pruitt said he remains committed to protecting all Oklahomans, especially farmers and ranchers, from the agendas of out-of-state groups.

“If those interests come into the state in the future, perhaps it will be time to respond that way again,” Pruitt said. “In the meantime, we’ll be on guard against that.”

Also, reported by various media outlets, Pruitt has met with President-elect Donald Trump’s transition team leading speculation that Pruitt is being considered for the head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency position. For more information, check out OKAgPolicy.