

PERSPECTIVE

November 20, 2020



Grassroots Farm Bureau members elect new leaders

Oklahoma Farm Bureau members elected three new members to the organization's board of directors during district caucus meetings held Thursday, Nov. 5.

Leon Richards of Texas County, Kerry Givens of Comanche County and Stacy Simunek of Kay County were each chosen by voting delegates in districts one, four and seven, respectively, to serve a three-year term on the OKFB board of directors.

Leon Richards will represent members in northwest Oklahoma's district one which includes Beaver, Cimarron, Dewey, Ellis, Harper, Texas and Woodward Counties.

A farmer and rancher near Turpin, Oklahoma, Richards owns a dryland farming operation consisting of grain sorghum and wheat in addition to a cow/calf operation.

"I appreciate my fellow members

here in district one for placing their confidence in me to carry this forward and being able to give back because Farm Bureau has given so much to me," Richards said. "I hope that I can provide others with the same opportunities."

The Panhandle native has been a Farm Bureau member for 30 years and currently serves as president of Texas County Farm Bureau.

Members chose Kerry Givens of Comanche County to represent OKFB's district four which includes Carter, Comanche, Cotton, Jefferson, Johnston, Love, Marshall, Murray and Stephens Counties.

A cattle order buyer, Givens also runs cattle and grows hay and grass on his farm and ranch near Cache, Oklahoma.

"I've always been fascinated and appreciative of the grassroots organization of Oklahoma Farm Bureau," Givens said. "I think it's important now

more than ever that we stand shoulder to shoulder to protect our interests and our rural American values."

Currently serving as president of Comanche County Farm Bureau, Givens has been a Farm Bureau member for three decades.

Stacy Simunek will serve members in seven counties across the north central region of the state including Alfalfa, Garfield, Grant, Kay, Major, Noble and Woods Counties.

In addition to running a family-owned hay equipment business, Simunek raises beans, wheat and triticale alongside a cow/calf and stocker operation.

A grandfather of four, Simunek said he decided to serve on the OKFB board of directors to work for a brighter future for the agriculture community to ensure his grandchildren can be successful on the farm and ranch.

"If somebody doesn't stand up and work for the worries of the farmer, (my grandsons) won't have that opportunity," Simunek said. "That's my drive: to get agriculture back in the forefront where consumers understand what we're doing out here."

The Blackwell native currently serves as president of the Kay County Farm Bureau and has been involved with the county organization for 19 years.

Other leaders elected

Mignon Bolay of Noble County was re-elected to serve a two-year term as chair of the OKFB Women's Leadership Committee during the group's online business meeting held Thursday, Nov. 5 at 12 p.m.

"I'm honored to have the opportunity to once again serve alongside such wonderful Farm Bureau women on the state committee and in counties throughout the state," Bolay said. "We're

Continued on back

Payne County earns top OKFB county/YF&R awards

Payne County Farm Bureau was honored with the Oklahoma Farm Bureau's top county and Young Farmers and Ranchers awards during a special awards presentation on Friday, Nov. 13.

The county was presented with the John I. Taylor Award, which serves as OKFB's highest county honor. Named for the organization's first president, the award recognizes excellence in program areas of public policy, local affairs service to members, membership, Women's Leadership Committee and Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee.

Payne County also was honored with the OKFB Lewis H. Munn Award, also known as the Farm Bureau Builders Award. The honor is given to the county that conducts the strongest program in a chosen area. This year, the county program area was membership involvement.

"Our board and members have worked hard in the past few years to put together more and more programs," said Nancy German, Payne County Farm Bureau president. "It tops off what we do to try to excel in our communities. We've tried hard to put Payne County Farm Bureau back on the map."

Due to challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, Payne County looked for creative ways to get members involved in

their annual events. A highlight event of the year is county resolutions meeting, which allows members to send their solutions to agricultural and rural issues in their communities to be considered for inclusion in the OKFB policy book.

As the winner of both the John I. Taylor Award and the Lewis H. Munn Award, the county received two traveling trophies to be displayed in the county office.

The Payne County YF&R committee was honored with the OKFB YF&R Charles L. Roff Award, presented to the state's top county YF&R committee. The award encourages YF&R members to improve their local committees while helping to strengthen the Farm Bureau organization.

Payne County YF&R committee earned the award for its work to promote Farm Bureau and agriculture throughout its local community.

Many Payne County YF&R members were active on the state level, attending legislative events, YF&R conferences and OKFB events.

The county received a plaque in recognition for their outstanding committee involvement.

For the full article, visit okfarmbureau.org/awards2020.



Enter to win Ford ride-on toy through OKFB giveaway

For agricultural producers across the state, Ford vehicles have played an integral part of their everyday farming and ranching practices, along with shuttling Oklahoma's future producers to and from school, as they raise the next generation of Ford customers.

The youngest of future Ford customers now have the chance to drive their very own Ford Bronco 6-volt ride-on toy through Oklahoma Farm Bureau's giveaway on their Facebook page.

To enter the giveaway:

1. **Like the three OKFB posts highlighting the Ford Bronco 6-volt ride-on toy giveaway directly from the OKFB Facebook page.**
2. **Share the three OKFB Bronco giveaway posts directly from the OKFB Facebook page.**
 - Posts will be shared on Monday, Nov. 16, Monday, Nov. 23 and Monday, Nov. 30.
3. **Ensure each post is made public.**
 - Once you share the post, click the three dots in the top right corner of the post; Click 'Edit Audience'; Select 'Public'.

To be eligible to win, participants must **like and share** all three posts by **Friday, Dec. 4 at 12 p.m.** One randomly selected winner will be announced Monday, Dec. 7 on Facebook.

For full details, visit okfarmbureau.org/news/broncogiveaway.



Nine OKFB secretaries recognized for District Secretary of the Year

Oklahoma Farm Bureau recently named nine secretaries for its District Secretary of the Year Awards.

The District Secretary of the Year Award is presented to one county Farm Bureau secretary from each OKFB district for their contributions to the overall success of their county Farm Bureau. County secretaries conduct the daily operations of the county Farm Bureau and help meet the needs of members.

District One

Chelsea Collins
Texas County

District Two

Shelby Monroe
Harmon County

District Three

Billie Coffman
Logan County

District Four

Fay Foster
Jefferson County

District Five

Trudie Towler
LeFlore County

District Six

Gail Plummer
Nowata County

District Seven

Lea Anne Steelmon
Kay County

District Eight

Teresa Wilson
Seminole County

District Nine

Donna Wayland
Lincoln County

Each of the nine recipients of the award will receive a plaque to be displayed.

Nash joins OKFB as communications specialist

Oklahoma Farm Bureau recently hired Rebekah Nash as a communications specialist.

Nash is re-joining OKFB after completing the 2019 summer communications internship program. She will assist the organization in creating and managing content for social media, overseeing the website, and providing support for written content.

“Growing up in agriculture ignited my passion for the industry, but after my internship with OKFB, I knew I wanted to tell the stories of farmers and ranchers,” Nash said. “I am looking forward to meeting members from across the state and learning more about Oklahoma’s extensive agricultural industry.”

Originally from Moweaqua, Illinois, Nash was raised on a grain farm and graduated from Oklahoma State University with an agricultural communications degree in May.



Rebekah Nash

County Farm Bureaus honored for excellence

County Farm Bureaus were recently recognized for their efforts to further agriculture and rural Oklahoma.

Each year, OKFB recognizes the county Farm Bureaus across the state that have excelled in program areas such as membership, public policy, local affairs, service to members, Women’s Leadership Committee and Young Farmers and Ranchers with a Presidential Star Award.

Six Star Countie

Payne County
Woodward County
Comanche County
Okmulgee County
Okfuskee County

Five Star Counties

Nowata County
Kiowa County
LeFlore County
Washita County
Kingfisher County

Four Star Counties

Texas County
Custer County
Stephens County
Rogers County
Alfalfa County

Three Star Counties

Kay County
Woods County
Washington County
Lincoln County
Love County
Jackson County
Choctaw County

The remaining award recipients will be announced in the next issue of *Perspective*, including YF&R Excellence in Agriculture, Journalist of the Year and quota counties.

Even though 2020 has been very different than most years, we are still celebrating all of the hard work happening throughout the state. Join us during the month of November as we highlight each of the outstanding winners. Be sure to follow us on Facebook and at okfarmbureau.org to learn about each award and how you can get involved next year!

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OKFB Foundation for Agriculture, WLC donate ag books to educators

Twelve Oklahoma educators from across the state were recently awarded a bushel basket of accurate agriculture books for their classrooms.

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture, alongside the OKFB Women's Leadership Committee, sponsored this year's Bushels for Books program. The program takes donated bushels of any commodity crop, as well as monetary donations from farmers and ranchers, and provides bushel baskets of accurate agriculture books to Oklahoma educators of all grade levels.

Applications were accepted from teachers across the state, and winners were chosen by the WLC state committee. The books cover various agriculture topics and were picked from the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture's list.

Educators receiving books this year include Dr. Shelly Beach, Maysville; Sherri Biggs, Edmond; Jayla Craig, Poteau; Karee Grim, Perry; Teresia Harrison, Stratford; Patti Horne, Indianola; Lori Hotfelt; Claremore; Melanie Huston, Tishomingo; Laura Jackson, Snyder; Sharon Lantelme, Shattuck; Becky Owings, Cushing; and Laura Payne, Mountain View.

For more information on the Bushels for Books program, please visit www.OKFBFoundationForAgriculture.org/Bushels-For-Books/.

Grassroots Farm Bureau members elect new leaders *continued*

looking forward to a great 2021 as we continue our work to share the efforts of farmers and ranchers to feed and clothe the world."

Farm Bureau women also elected Robin Bryant of Dewey County to represent district one on the OKFB WLC. Sandra Berry of Stephens County and Terry Pederson of Alfalfa County were re-elected to serve three-year terms for districts four and seven, respectively.

Cody and Kara Goodknight of Comanche County were chosen to serve as chairs of the OKFB Young Farmers and Ranchers committee at the group's caucus held Saturday, Oct. 24 in Oklahoma City.

"We are honored to have the opportunity to serve as chairs of the YF&R committee this year," Cody Goodknight said. "We greatly enjoy networking with other agriculturalists around our state and country and are excited about the activities Farm Bureau has planned for next year."

Others elected to serve on the YF&R committee include Chism and Heather Sander of Dewey County, district one; Dustin Ratliff of Noble County, district seven; John and Myiul Morris of Cotton County, at-large; and River Mitchell of Comanche County, at-large.