

President’s Report– Ann Marie Heizmann



Thank you for once again honoring me by allowing me to represent you as President of Seneca County Farm Bureau. It is a responsibility that I try very hard to uphold. Please feel free to contact me with any concerns or needs you may have. We are looking forward to some great programming through our combined Pro-Ed and Young Farmer Committee. To lend a hand, contact Renee Rose or Jessica Rappleye. Keep up-to-date on everything SCFB on Facebook at facebook.com/SenecaCountyFarmBureau.

It’s been a very busy past few months and we have hosted and attended some great events—a record setting crowd for our County Annual Meeting in October; the 100th Anniversary Barn Party in December (see more below); a productive NYFB State Annual Meeting to end the year; and a recent successful trip to Albany to take part in NYFB’s Taste of New York Reception and Lobby Day. The Albany trip gave lawmakers from across the state a unique look at the diversity and importance of agriculture and allowed us to advocate for state policies to help move our industry forward. Our 48th Annual Urban Rural Dinner is right around the corner. I encourage you to attend and enjoy a four course local dinner paired with local wines, great company and conversation (details on the front of this newsletter). The county Farm Bureau has also been dealing with some local proposals that, if enacted, could have a detrimental impact on local agriculture (see more on the next page). I urge you to lend your voice at upcoming public hearings or through conversations with your elected officials. Together we can make a difference!

100th Anniversary Barn Party

The 100th Anniversary Barn Party held in December at Rodman Lott and Son Farm for the Home Bureau, later split to become Seneca County Cooperative Extension (SCCCE) and Seneca County Farm Bureau (SCFB), was a huge success with roughly 300 people in attendance. Senator Pam Helming presented proclamations from Assemblyman Brian Kolb, Assemblyman Phil Palmesano and herself congratulating us on serving the farm community for 100 years. Jami Lee Willard of SCFB and Christie Brewer from SCCCE did an amazing job of putting together the displays showcasing the history of both groups and the farms that started it all. **We proudly honored those farms that started it all and are still actively farming:** Serven Farms, Gem Lake Farms, Thompson Lakeview Farms, Eastman Farms, Compton Farms, Myer Farms and Airy Acres Vineyard (Bassette Farms). They all received a tree and a commemorative plaque for their contribution to agriculture. **Thank you** to our sponsors for allowing us to host this free party. They include: Farm Credit East, Seneca Meadows Industries, Wade Bennett DJ, Brewers Septic, del Lago Resort and Casino, Community Bank, Michael Nozzolio, Rodman Lott and Son Farms, Waterloo Rotary, The DeLong Co., Meyers Farm Distillery, 3 Brothers Winery, Westwind Farms, Upstate Niagara Co-Op, Byrne Dairy, Sheldrake Point Winery, Meadeville Farm Pumpkin Patch, Sinicropi Florist and Fleur de Lis Brew Works.

We look forward to the next 100 years of supporting agriculture.



The presentation of the 100th Anniversary Proclamation.

Local News

Proposed Zoning Changes Cause for Concern

Under a new proposed zoning change in the Town of Tyre, agriculture is not allowed along Route 318 from just east of the new apartment complex to Route 89. If you drive by, you’ll notice the entire stretch is almost all fields. Another troubling provision includes that all farmers must hide all equipment from view and cannot store anything outside. They are also placing severe restrictions on home-based businesses. Seneca County Farm Bureau asked the Department of Agriculture and Markets to take a look, resulting in four pages of objections submitted to the Town Board for consideration. **Please watch the Town of Tyre website for public hearings and be sure to attend to voice your opinion.** You do not need to be a Tyre resident.

There are also restrictive zoning proposals that will make it impossible to farm in the Town of Ulysses which borders Covert. They will need our support at public hearings. The Department of Agriculture and Markets can help, but we need to speak up now before these laws are passed. Once passed, it could take up to two years to undo these onerous restrictions. **Please attend the public hearings** and talk to everyone you know to educate them on the need to prevent restrictive laws from being passed.

Seneca County Building Codes and NYS Building, Fire and Energy Codes

After many issues with building codes, we reconvened the county Farm Bureau Public Policy Committee to put forth a solution. Concerns ranged from a building codes officer trying to force a farm to bring their maintenance shop up to code to placing a stop work order on a chicken hatchery stating it was a commercial manufacturing facility. The committee consisted of former State Senator Michael Nozzolio, Kelsey DeCloux of Westwind Farm, Tom Murray of Muranda Cheese, Craig Partee of Fleur de Lis Brewery, engineer Steve Messmer of Lively Run Dairy, Jason McCormick, a public engineer, SCFB President Ann Marie Heizmann of Meadeville Farm and assistance from Town of Fayette Supervisor Cindy Lorenzetti. The committee quickly

realized there were two issues: the Seneca County Codes Department and the current edition of the NYS Building, Fire and Energy Code.

SCFB worked with Seneca County to address the issue there and the County Board of Supervisors agreed to hire a Director of Public Works that is a public engineer to provide more oversight and guidance to codes officers. SCFB will continue to monitor this to see how it works.

The current NYS Building, Fire and Energy Code removed the grandfather clause, requiring any change of use for a current building to be brought up to current code. Were you thinking of turning an equipment shed into a farm stand? The cost to bring it up to NYS Building, Fire and Energy Code will likely make it cost prohibitive. Most of the issues lie in the energy code that requires insulation levels, certain ceiling heights, lighting and more. Steve and Jason did extensive research allowing the committee to propose new policy at SCFB’s annual meeting. After discussion and revisions, new policy was passed supporting the committee’s recommendation. This then became NYFB policy at the State Annual Meeting in December. The new policy reads:

“Agricultural Buildings are defined as places of employment or public access affiliated with the direct production, treating, processing, packing, or public sale of agricultural products where the maximum occupant load of said agricultural building is restricted to less than 50 persons, even if the allowable design load is greater.”

A big thank you to our Public Policy Committee for quickly moving this issue forward.

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Seneca County Board of Directors usually meets on the first Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

Seneca County
Farm Bureau News
March 2018



Ovid-Willard & Waterloo Lions Club, Seneca County Farm Bureau, Seneca Falls Rotary, Waterloo Rotary

**Join your rural and urban neighbors for the
48th Rural Urban Dinner
Monday, April 2 at 6:30 p.m.**



Speaker: Executive Chef Joseph Caratozzolo
Program: “The Rewards and Challenges of Doing Farm-to-Table in the Finger Lakes”
Locally Sourced Wine Pairing Family Style Dinner
Raffle and Silent Auction
Profits donated to  in Seneca County

**Tickets are \$30 and available at: Copy Shop and Fleur De Lis Brewery in Seneca Falls,
Firehouse Distillery in Ovid, online at meadvillefarms.com or
by mail: Waterloo Rotary Club, PO Box 466, Waterloo, NY 13165**

Thank you to our sponsors: del Lago Resort & Casino, Seneca Meadow Industries, Rosenkrans Farms, Rosenkrans Natural Beef Company, Westwind Farms, Seneca County Farm Bureau and Muranda Cheese Company

Be a sponsor: \$175 includes two dinner tickets.
For more information, email senecacountyfarmbureau@gmail.com