

Around OUR COUNTY

..... A PUBLICATION AND MEMBER BENEFIT OF ASHLAND COUNTY FARM BUREAU

WINTER 2018

Meet Your President: Matt Stewart

Ashland County Farm Bureau President Matt Stewart took office in August 2014 and has stayed very busy with Farm Bureau activities! Since his election, Matt has led monthly board meetings, volunteered on various committees and projects, and served as a voting delegate for Ashland County at the Ohio Farm Bureau (OFBF)'s annual meeting in December for several years.

Matt was born in Blacklick where his family owned and operated Blacklick Feed Mill until 2001. Matt worked there from the time he could push a broom! Raised by his dad, Rick Stewart, in neighboring Licking County, Matt along with his brother Dan, raised and showed their 4-H animals at the Hartford Fair. After college, he also helped out at his cousin's Standardbred horse farm, Spring Haven Farm.

Matt moved to Ashland County in January 2004, after meeting Jen Ayers at her family's August square dance. Matt and Jen have since been married 12.5 years and stay busy with their 4 children: Locke (6), Brooke (4), Landon (2), and Madelyn (6 mo). In addition to raising hay and



maintaining a 15 brood cow herd, Matt is going into his 8th year as an Independent Sales Agent for the Haudenschild Agency. In his spare time, Matt also serves as the President for Ashland County Cattlemen's Association and serves as a Youth Leader alongside Jen at Perrysville Baptist Church.

Matt decided to get more involved with Ashland County Farm Bureau because of how agriculture has blessed his family and to make sure he did his part to be a voice for agriculture. He wants his children to have the opportunity to raise

livestock when they're old enough. Matt's goals for Ashland County Farm Bureau in 2018 are to continue to grow our Young Farmer membership, support our county farmers as they forge through the current agricultural climate, and help to educate the non-farm public on the great role and responsibilities that farmers provide to our county and country.

Thank you Matt for your commitment to Ashland County Farm Bureau! We are lucky to have you!

SCHOLARSHIPS DUE MARCH 15TH!

Ashland Co Farm Bureau is distributing a total of \$3,000 in scholarships via the Ashland County Community Foundation for 2018. Please share of this scholarship opportunity with any Ashland County youth that will be studying in an agriculture-related field in the fall of 2018! To apply, go to communityfoundation.org and complete the application online.

Scholarship details: Scholarships are awarded to assist graduating high school seniors and current college students that are residents of Ashland County or have graduated from any Ashland County high school who have a GPA of 2.5 or higher and have been accepted to an accredited two or four year college/university. Only those majoring in an agricultural related field

will be considered. Students will be evaluated on extracurricular activities, work experience and communication based on essay. Additional points will be awarded for students involved in agriculture related extracurricular activities and students who are members or dependents of members of the Ashland County Farm Bureau. Past recipients may reapply.

A LOOK BACK AT 2017...

Ashland County Farm Bureau awarded Agricultural Organization of the Year by the Ashland Chamber of Commerce

- In March of 2017, Ashland County was named the Agricultural Organization of the Year by the Ashland Chamber of Commerce for their work in supplying local fire departments with grain bin rescue tubes and augers.



Ashland County Fair - Ashland County Farm Bureau, along with 4 local sponsors, provided t-shirts to 4-H exhibitors at the Ashland County Fair.

Farm Tour - Ashland County Farm Bureau organized the School Tour on September 28th and 29th for local 4th grade classes to come to Buckeye Country Creamery and tour the dairy farm as well as stop at several ag-related stations throughout the farm. The drive-it-yourself farm tour was held September 30th and October 1st with well over 1,000 attending!

Young Ag Professionals - New this year, Ashland teamed up with Wayne County to form the Ashland/Wayne Young Ag Professionals. Events included a summer kick-off picnic in July, a Careers in Ag info session held for local FFA chapters, and an agricultural toy drive benefiting Toys for Tots. Over \$3,500 in toys were purchased for local children this Christmas and we could not have done it without the support of these sponsors!



Silver level: 3-D Meats, Certified Angus Beef, Farm Credit Mid-America, Hartzler Family Dairy, Lowe & Young, Roto-Rooter, Shearer Equipment, and Western & Southern Insurance.

Gold level: Apple Creek Banking Company, Bent Ladder Cider & Wine, BG's Main Event, Congressman Bob Gibbs, Davis Tree Farm, Hi Hills Farm, Marinello Realty, Rural King of Ohio- Wooster, ReMax- Wooster, State Auto Insurance, State Representative Darrell Kick, Stoller Equipment, Trent Insurance Group, and WQKT Radio.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2018!

- **Member Appreciation Breakfast** – Join us for a free pancake and sausage breakfast at Mozelle Hall from 9-11 AM on February 10th at the Ashland County Fairgrounds! Renew your membership or sign a new member at the breakfast and receive \$5 in cash back!
- **Trip to Fair Oaks Farm** – Join Ashland, Holmes, Medina, and Wayne County Farm Bureau members on April 12th and 13th for an overnight trip to Fair Oaks Farm in Fair Oaks, IN! Cost is \$175 per person and includes: Tour bus,



overnight accommodations (double occupancy), group meals, tours at Fair Oaks Farms of the Dairy, Pig and Crop Adventures, and tour of the Wilson Ball Factory. Call 330-263-7456 to reserve your spot!

- **Drive-It-Yourself Farm Tour** – Dates for the farm tour are Saturday and Sunday, September 29th and 30th. This year's tour will be located in northern Ashland County. If you or someone you know is interested in hosting a stop on the tour, please contact the office at 330-263-7456!

2017 DISTINGUISHED VOLUNTEER JUSTIN RINGLER



Justin Ringler grew up in Richland County and got involved in Farm Bureau through a neighbor. Justin then moved to the Loudonville area of Ashland County to work alongside his wife's (Molly) family dairy. Justin, Molly, and their 4 children (Grace, Steven, Galen, and Sophia) stay busy on the family farm and with involvement in several community organizations. Justin, initially, got involved with Ashland County Farm Bureau through his interest in Issue 2. Since then, Justin has served as a board member, delegate to the OFBF annual meeting, and served as many different committee chairs- including membership. Ashland County Farm Bureau is extremely appreciative of Justin's efforts in last year's membership campaign and for his willingness to help again this year.

BAKER RE-ELECTED TO SERVE THIRD TERM FOR THE OHIO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

Roger Baker of Wooster has been re-elected as District 8 trustee for the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. During his third three-year term, he will help govern the state's largest general farm organization and represent Farm Bureau members from Ashland, Medina, Summit and Wayne counties. His re-election took place Dec. 8 during Ohio Farm Bureau's 99th annual meeting.

A 27-year member of Wayne County Farm Bureau, Baker has served as a county board trustee and chairman of the public policy committee and is a past vice president of the board. In 2001, he was an OFBF Discussion Meet finalist and participated in a trade mission to Europe in 2000. He also has served on the Wayne County Extension Advisory Committee and the state Extension Advisory Committee.

Baker graduated from Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute with an associate's degree in agricultural business and agronomy. He and his wife Diane are parents of a daughter, Mary, and they raise row crops and hay and have a small beef cow herd.



WATER QUALITY POSES A MAJOR TOPIC IN 2018

2017 held many agricultural policy victories for Ohio with the reformulation of the CAUV formula being one of the most notable which should bring property tax relief to Ohio farmers over the next six years. As we look to 2018, water quality continues to pose a major topic for Farm Bureau. Ohio Farm Bureau has been active in addressing this topic over the last 4 years and released the 2017 water quality status report in June. This report highlighted the efforts of local farmers in improving water quality through fertilizer application training, use of cover crops, waste management plans, and research and development on their properties. These efforts have been recognized and Ohio Farm Bureau has been asked to contribute details on Ohio farmer's voluntary efforts to reduce P levels in Lake Erie in the Ohio action plan required by the federal EPA. Research and volunteer efforts will continue into 2018 so keep an eye on your Buckeye Farm News for policy updates from Ohio Farm Bureau!

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