



For Immediate Release

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83nd Annual Farm City Dinner

The 83rd annual Farm city dinner was held on Thursday, March 12th at the Jefferson Street Inn downtown Wausau. The event has a tradition of bringing together rural and urban communities, recognizing each other's value and a realization of how much each has to offer. The reception began at 6:00 pm followed by a program highlighting the accomplishments of groups and individuals. The emcee for the evening was Zoey Brooks, the 2014 Alice in Dairyland.

The Marathon County Outstanding Young Farmer award went to Dan and Sarah Griesbach. Applicants were evaluated on the progress in their agricultural career, soil and water conservation practices they implement, as well as their community involvement. They must also be 38 years old or younger and receive at least 2/3 of their income from farming. Dan and Sarah will represent Marathon County at the State Outstanding Young Farmer program next January.

The prestigious Century Farm Award is given to farms with 100 years of continuous family ownership. The Partnership for Progressive Agriculture (PPA) honored Arthur and Sue Becker for having maintained 100 years of continuous farm ownership and were commended for their contributions to our community over the past 100 years.

For the first time in the history of the Partnership for Progressive Agriculture, we recognized Eugene and Kelly Dehnel for maintaining 150 years as a sesquicentennial farm. The amount of dedication and hard work is immeasurable.

The Marathon County Farm Technology Days Scholarship program recognizes students each year who plan to continue their education in an agricultural related field of study with the University of Wisconsin or Wisconsin Technical College system. This year's scholarship recipients include: Rachelle Neumann, Casey Piez and Derek Tomczik. Each will receive a \$1,000 scholarship made possible through earnings generated from the 1996 and 2011 Marathon County Farm Technology Days events.

The PPA also recognizes an individual or business that supports agriculture in Marathon County through the Friend of Agriculture Award. This year's recipient, Mary Kay VanDerGeest, has been an advocate for agriculture in our community for many years. Mary Kay is currently serving as a Director on the United FCS Board, serves on the WI River Pro Rodeo Committee and also the NTDC Foundation Board. She is instrumental in the planning and coordination of the Ag Adventure Tent at the WI Valley Fair, and is a past member of the Wausau Chamber of Commerce and Partnership for Progressive Agriculture Board.

The Fairest of the Fair was also crowned at this event. Mckenzie Valenta, the 2014 Fairest of the Fair, introduced two contestants: Emily Stubbe and Anissa Walters. Mckenzie gave her farewell and passed her crown on to the 2015 Fairest of the Fair, Anissa Walters.

This year a live auction was held with items donated by Vine Vest, The Wisconsin Fair Board, Nortrax, Partnership for Progressive Agriculture, Country Fresh Meats, VanDerGeest Dairy Cattle, and Willow Springs Garden to support the educational efforts of the Ag Adventure Tent at the Wisconsin Valley Fair. This event is hosted by the PPA in partnership with NTC and Marathon County. Other Partner Members include AbbyBank, Country Fresh Meats, Wisconsin Public Service, Vine Vest North, United FCS, Swiderski Equipment, Marathon Feed and Grain, Ruder Ware Inc., Rural Mutual Insurance-Leon Woller, VanDerGeest Dairy, CoVantage Credit Union and the Marathon County Agricultural Society.