

## DATES TO REMEMBER

**Agriculture  
Literacy Week**  
March 19 - 23

**Easter**  
April 1

**Spring Dinner**  
April 6  
Extension Center

**Farmers Care  
event**  
April 12  
Pittsburgh Ronald  
McDonald House

**FARMER Dinner**  
April 16  
(Note Date Change)  
Harrisburg Hilton

**State  
Legislative  
Conference**  
April 17  
(Note Date Change)  
Harrisburg Hilton

**Summer Picnic**  
July 22  
Place TBA

## Mercer County Farm Bureau Spring Dinner

The MCFB spring dinner will be at 6:30 p.m. Friday, April 6 at the Leslie N. Firth Education Center (home of Mercer County Extension), 463 Perry Highway, Mercer, Pa 16137.

William Thiele, dairy farmer from Butler County will share how he and his family are using drones on their farm. "The Drone Guy" and his twin brother James are the sixth generation working on their farm. You may have seen these brothers at the Butler County Farm Tour; PFB State Convention; or read about them in Country Focus. These accomplished Butler County Farm Bureau members received the 2017 PFB Social Media Award, winning a trip to the AFBF YF&R Leadership Conference in Reno last month.

### **Please bring items to be taken to the Ronald McDonald House.**

Suggested items include: travel-sized toiletries, paper products, non-perishable food items and Giant Eagle gift cards. These items will be delivered later in April.

Reservations are \$13 per person. Make reservations by March 30 with Lisa Robinson, 612 Riverside Ave, Grove City, PA 16127; 724-992-2138; or e-



## Just announced!

For a limited time, PFB members can save \$1,000 off a new Ford. **Now through April 2, 2018**, [visit your local dealer](#) to save even more on the purchase or lease of an eligible new 2017/2018 vehicle.

Go online to <https://www.fordspecialoffer.com/farmbureau/pa/> and take advantage of this members-only offer today.

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## Connecting with our Ag Community

Sandy Craft and her husband Bob have embraced the Mercer County agricultural community. They are enjoying life in their rural home and have become involved in the organizations that are important to Mercer County agriculture.

"I was surprised that there was no FFA in Mercer County," Sandy said. "Not one school had an ag program."

As she began to talk to folks she learned that one by one the ag programs were closed.

"Agriculture is the number one industry in our state and we have no presence in our school curriculum!"

Being new to the area, she didn't know whom she should or shouldn't talk to so she just started to visit with people.

She found an ally in Jay Russell, director of the county conservation district, who is also new to the area. Together they began doing some research that, most recently, resulted in a meeting at the Mercer County Career Center with the superintendents of schools from across the county.

Part of the presentation that Sandy made at that meeting will be shown at the spring dinner meeting.

Kelsey Stewart, state FFA chaplain, from Franklin County and retired Mohawk ag teacher, Cliff Wallace, shared with the superintendents how FFA and ag education isn't just about preparing students to become production farmers.

If you are a school board member or know a school board member in your school district, please have a conversation about the need for an agricultural program at the Mercer County Career Center and the benefits of including FFA there for the students.

It will be interesting to follow the progress of this project.



*Kelsey Stewart, PA State FFA Chaplain and Sandy Craft, former school superintendent, present rationale to Mercer County school superintendents for offering agriculture education at the Mercer County Career Center.*

## AFBF Convention

Bob and Sandy Craft, Sam Huff and Andrew Spencer attended the American Farm Bureau Federation Convention in Nashville in January.

"President Trump and Reba on the same day!," Sam said as he reflected on the annual meeting for Farm Bureau members from across the nation.

All those that attended found the speakers superb.

They enjoyed getting to participate at the national meeting and meeting and visiting with people from all parts of agriculture.

They also were present to see PFB be recognized as one of the outstanding Farm Bureau programs in the nation.

If you ever have the opportunity to attend the AFBF Convention, take advantage. It brings a whole new perspective to the words, 'Farm Bureau.'



*William Thiele our dinner speaker, uses his drone to promote PFB at the YF&R Conference.*

### **Farmtastic Book Program**

MCFB is seeking donors who would like to place a book in their local school or library. Each book costs \$10 and a bookplate honoring the donor/s will be printed to put in the book before it is delivered. This year's book is *Sleep Tight Farm*, by Eugenie Doyle. We hope to have books will be available at the spring meeting, April 6.

Return form and check for \$10 per book to: Lisa Robinson, 612 Riverside Ave, Grove City, PA 16127. Make checks payable to Mercer County Farm Bureau.

Donor Information:
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Other honoree (if applicable): _____
Mailing Address: _____
Phone: _____ E-mail: _____
School or Library where you would like to donate your book(s): _____
_____

## Ag Literacy Week

The Second Annual Pennsylvania Ag Literacy Week is **March 19 to 23**. If you would like to participate by reading to a primary school class, please contact Sandy Craft, district women's leadership chair, at 814-715-4244, or by email: [craft5@windstream.net](mailto:craft5@windstream.net) to get the details.

## Safety Contest 2018

This year's theme is "Think Safe, Be Safe." All entries are due to Lisa by May 1. Contact Lisa at 724-992-2138 to receive a copy of the guidelines or visit the PFB website and download the information from there.

The categories are:

Ages 4-6: Coloring Page

Ages 7 – 12: Poster Drawing

Ages 13 – 18: Photo Contest

Please let Lisa know if you know any teachers who would like this information for their students.

## Farmers' Care

The Farmers' Care program supports the Ronald McDonald House in Pittsburgh. Donations will be taken to the house April 12. Please bring travel-sized toiletries, paper products or non-perishable food items to the spring dinner for this project. They also appreciate gift cards, especially from Giant Eagle. All items are used for families with members in the hospital in Pittsburgh.

Your support is greatly appreciated.

## Educator's Ag Institute

The Educator's Ag Institute this summer at Penn State is planned for July 8-12. Please help Mercer County find teachers to send to this great event. We heard at the fall dinner from teachers who participated last year and how much they benefited from the experience.

The conference gives teachers an up close and personal look at farming practices, and how they can use agriculture as the basis for lesson plans across the curriculum.

The Educator's Ag Institute is open to new educators, along with those who have previously attended our Ag in the Classroom workshop. Participants will also tour several area farms and hear from farmers about how they grow food, care for and feed their animals, and how the farm is run. Educators will receive Act 48 credits and/or can register for continuing education credits through Penn State.

Please contact any board member with the name and contact information of a teacher who may be interested. If you would like brochures to give to teachers let the board know.



Rep. Kelly's Mercer County office:  
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**RESERVATIONS for April 6 Spring Dinner \$13 PER PERSON**

*Reservations are due March 30, 2018*

Send reservations to: Lisa Robinson, 612 Riverside Ave., Grove City, PA 16127 or contact her by e-mail:  
lmr99699@gmail.com or phone: 724-992-2138 (She also has text).

Number of people attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$13 total \_\_\_\_\_

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