

Scholarship offerings announced by Farm Bureau

The Stephenson County Farm Bureau Foundation is pleased to announce its scholarship offerings for the 2012-13 academic year. Again this year we'll have two different programs, one for graduating high school seniors and one for college students with at least 30 credit hours earned so far. We're offering five \$500 Ag Studies grants for graduating high school seniors who are dependents of a SCFB member and who attend school in a Stephenson County school or a district immediately adjacent (such as Pecatonica, Forreston, Eastland, etc.). Students must be enrolled in ag classes and/or be a member of their FFA chapter, and they must be continuing their education in ag studies or a related discipline at a university, college, community college or trade school. Applications are available at www.stephensoncfb.org or at the Farm Bureau office, and deadline for applications is April 13.

Our college-level scholarships this year will include six (6) Ag Studies grants, six (6) General Studies grants, and two (2) Non-Traditional Student scholarships, each in the amount of \$500. Two additional \$500 Ag Studies scholarships will again be provided by the Stephenson County Pork Producers Association, and applicants must be a SCFB member or dependent of a member and have earned 30 or more credit hours thus far. Non-Traditional Student applicants are those returning to college after an extended absence, job displacement, or other circumstances. Those seeking advanced graduate degrees are also eligible for consideration. Application deadline for these grants has been moved up to May 31, 2012, and applications are available at www.stephensoncfb.org or at the Farm Bureau office. Please call us at (815) 232-3186 with any questions; we look forward to another good crop of applicants.

Speaking of scholarships

The IAA Foundation, Illinois Farm Bureau's philanthropic arm which provides support for education enrichment at many levels, has an extensive lineup of scholarships available for the 2012-13 academic year. New this year is a commitment of \$40,000 from the Illinois Soybean Association designated for ten (10) \$4000 scholarships to college juniors enrolled at an Illinois university with a major in a crop production or crop science discipline with an emphasis on soybeans. Awardees will be expected to find on-campus employment in soybean research and follow a career path to graduate school and a career in soybean research (it's my understanding that if selected, recipients will be eligible to automatically receive the grant each year through grad school). Applications are available at www.iaafoundation.org, and deadline for these and the many other IAA Foundation grants is February 1, 2012.

Summer Program Assistant position

For the past six years, Stephenson County Farm Bureau has employed a college-age person as our Summer Program Assistant, and we're extending an invitation for our summer 2012 opening. It's been an enjoyable experience for me to work with these bright, talented young people as they coordinated and assisted with FB programs and activities during our busy summer schedule. Several have since moved on to careers in agriculture and related areas, and we feel that the position is one that provides a variety of experiences and training opportunities.

The position runs from June 1 through mid-August (depending on school commitments) and provides a salary based on the individual's work schedule. Candidates should have completed at least one year of college and must have dependable transportation and insurance. An agricultural background is helpful but not required. Applications and information are available at www.stephensoncfb.org and applications are due to the SCFB office by February 29, 2012. Please call me at (815) 232-3186 or (815) 499-9387 for more information.

Black Hills trip preview

Our happy but tired group of Hawaii travelers returned from their excursion on January 17, and now the focus shifts to our next adventure to the Black Hills on September 22-28, 2012. We have a preview program set up here at the Farm Bureau on January 31 at 7 p.m. with Tri-State Travel coordinator Jack Wideman ready to present the details on this great journey. Farm Bureau members are encouraged to come out and see what we have planned for this trip, and we're meeting in early February to finalize plans for our biggest adventure yet – our extended trip to Australia and New Zealand in early 2013. Watch for details on that trip coming soon!

SCBA Winter Banquet

You're invited to the annual Stephenson County Beef Association Winter Banquet on Thursday February 9 at the Farm Bureau in Freeport. The event will begin with a delicious prime rib dinner at 6:30 p.m. followed by the program with brief comments from several Illinois Beef Association leaders. Featured speaker will be Pam Jahnke, a Wisconsin farm girl with a passion for agriculture who serves as Farm Director for the Wisconsin Farm Report radio network. Pam brings a wealth of experience and insight and will be a most entertaining and inspiring speaker. Tickets are \$15 and may be purchased at the Farm Bureau office through February 2.

Bruce Johnson is the manager of the Stephenson County Farm Bureau.