



95th Annual Meeting held

The annual meeting of the White County Farm Bureau, held on Friday, Jan. 8, marked the 95th annual gathering of the membership.

Rusty Walsh, president of the White County Farm Bureau, welcomed around 90 members and guests to the meeting.

The business meeting included approval of last year's minutes, financial reports, membership report, manager's report, president's report, as well as updates on the Young Leader Committee, Ag in the Classroom program, Wabash Valley Service Company, and Country Financial.

Rusty Walsh was re-elected to serve as the organization's president; Larry Beck was re-elected as vice president, and Kevin Seifried was re-elected to another term as secretary-treasurer. All three officers will serve a one-year term.

Members re-elected four township directors: Don Duvall for Hawthorne, Kyle Hoskins for Heralds Prairie, Richard Curd for Mill Shoals, and Ken Lamont for Phillips Township. Vance Burzynski was elected to replace Kevin McArthur as the director for Indian Creek Township. All of the township directors will serve a two-year term.

Rusty Walsh recognized two directors who retired from the board at last year's annual meeting. Bryan Williams retired as the Enfield Township director with 22 years of service.

He also recognized Richard Gates, who retired as the Carmi Township director with 12 years of service.

Zandrea Hafenrichter, choir director for Carmi-White County High School, introduced the Singin' Six, who performed four songs for the members.

The meeting concluded with a catered lunch from Yesterday's and door prizes.



Rusty Walsh, president of the White County Farm Bureau, called the 95th Annual Meeting to order on Jan. 8.

SPECIAL ELECTION FEATURE

U.S. Rep. John Shimkus

General introduction/bio: Congressman John Shimkus proudly serves the families of the 15th Congressional District of Illinois, a 33-county district that stretches more than 14,500 square miles. John serves on the House Energy and Commerce Committee and as chairman of its Subcommittee on the Environment and the Economy. As a senior member of this powerful committee, John has been instrumental in advancing legislation to make America energy independent through an "all-of-the-above" energy policy, improve public safety through enhanced 9-1-1 services and lower the cost of healthcare through market-driven, patient-centered reforms.

John has given his life to public service. His public service began as he graduated from West Point in 1980. After attending Airborne and Ranger school, John went on to serve as a U.S. Army infantry officer for six years, followed by serving in the U.S. Army Reserves until his retirement in 2008 as a lieutenant colonel. In addition to serving his country, John was a high school teacher and a county treasurer. Throughout his years of service to his country, state, and community, John has always stayed true to his commonsense conservative principles and values.

During his time in office, John has received the highest American Farm Bureau Federation award – the Golden Plow and the Illinois Farm Bureau Charles B. Shuman Distinguished Service Award. John's service led him to meet his wife, Karen, at his last duty station in California. John returned home to Collinsville in 1986 and Karen joined John a year later. John and Karen were married in 1987. They have three sons, David, Joshua and Daniel, and are raising them in Collinsville. The Shimkus family attends Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Collinsville, where Karen is the director of parish music and John serves as the head elder.



Shimkus

What is the most important issue facing your constituents? The most important issue facing the families of the 15th Congressional District is the economy and jobs. Too many Americans are out of work and too many business owners and farmers are struggling. It's time to get government out of the way, remove the bureaucratic red tape so employers have less burdensome rules and regulations so we can put people back to work.

I believe that government does not create jobs and in order to have employees, you must have employers. So we must make it easier on business owners by rolling back the onerous rules and regulations that impede job creation. Additionally, we must protect our farmers' ability to manage their farms without EPA overreach and burdensome government regulation.

What is the most important issue facing agriculture? The top issue facing Illinois farmers is economic well-being. To address this issue, I believe we must continue to promote trade, oppose excessive government regulations, and support and promote effective risk management tools.

Why are you the right candidate to represent our district? I'm the right candidate to represent the families of the 15th Congressional District because I have a common-sense conservative record that reflects the priorities of my constituents. It has been an honor to serve the people of the 15th Congressional District and a duty that I have not taken lightly. Being accessible to my constituents has always been a priority of mine and that is why I have been able to help thousands of families with issues with the federal government.

What would you like to achieve during your next term in office? In my next term, I hope to achieve eliminating burdensome government overreach that allows our farmers the freedom to work their land without the government on their back. With a Republican president, I will look to either defund or remove WOTUS; curtail EPA overreach; and solve the GMO labeling issue. As a long-time supporter of renewable fuels, I will continue to support and work to expand the availability of renewable fuels at the retail level.

What does the IFB Activator endorsement mean to you? I am proud to receive the Activator endorsement. This endorsement is a sign that we are both doing our jobs – farmers are making sure I am aware of the issues important to them, and I am leading on those issues.



SPECIAL ELECTION FEATURE

State Rep. David B. Reis (R-Ste. Marie)

Office: State representative – 109th District

Occupation: Farmer/legislator

Past government experience: State representative 2005 – present.

Education: University of Illinois, College of Agriculture, bachelor's degree, 1986; Lake Land College, Mattoon, associates of science, 1984; Newton Community High School, 1982.

What is the most important issue facing your constituents? There are several important issues facing legislators in the upcoming session. Far and away the most pressing issue facing the next General Assembly is to find a workable solution to the current fiscal year budget. For the first time in 12 years we have a balanced state government and we must come to an agreement on a budget that allows us to live within our means and prioritizes our spending.



Reis

What is the most important issue facing agriculture? With falling commodity and oil prices, profitability will be a major concern of farmers for several years to come. Pushing back on WOTUS and the Presidents

Clean Air Act regulations will be even more important to farmers as they look to fight back on these potential increased input costs. Restructuring and finding a consistent funding source for SWCD offices to help implement the voluntary nutrient loss reduction program will also be a top priority for me during the upcoming session.

Why are you the right candidate to represent our district? As a fifth-generation farmer and one of only a handful of legislators with agricultural experience, I feel that I am uniquely qualified to represent the issues and challenges farmers face everyday. I will continue to work with the Farm Bureau to help move forward with policy initiatives that will make a positive impact on our industry. I will continue to meet regularly with local Farm Bureau leaders and members and participate in IFB-sponsored activities such as the "certified legislator" program and the Annual Meeting in Chicago to stay current with the issues facing Illinois farmers.

What does the IFB Activator endorsement mean to you? Agriculture is the No. 1 industry in the state and a major economic driver in each of the nine counties that make up the 109th District. As always, it is an honor to have the support of the Farm Bureau and the tremendous grassroots participation of its members for the upcoming election.

Officers re-elected to WCFB Foundation board

The 4th Annual Meeting of the White County Farm Bureau Foundation was held on Jan. 8, 2016. Directors approved the previous year's minutes and the financial report.

All four current officers were re-elected for another one-year term: Rusty Walsh as president, Larry Beck as vice president, Kevin Seifried as secretary, and Don Duvall as treasurer.

As the Foundation board has the same directors as the White County Farm Bureau Board of Directors, Kevin McArthur retired from the Foundation board. Replacing McArthur is Vance Burzynski.

To make a financial contribution to the White County Farm Bureau Foundation, or for additional information on the purpose of the Foundation, go to www.whitecfb.com/foundation.html.

White Co. student scholarship available

The White County Farm Bureau Young Leaders Committee is pleased to offer one \$500 scholarship to a White County student. Applicant must reside in White County or be attending a White County school, and be majoring in an ag-related field of study for the fall 2016 semester.

Applications are available on the White CFB website at www.whitecfb.com. The deadline for submitting applications is Feb. 28.

On the Road Seminar

Trucking regulations got you scratching your head? Hearing conflicting explanations?

To sort truth from conjecture and fact from rumor, come join us at 8 a.m. March 9 at the White County Farm Bureau building in Carmi. Breakfast will be served.

The White County Farm Bureau is hosting this two-hour seminar that focuses on trucking laws for farmers — both new and well-worn. It'll take a special look at the latest "Covered Farm Vehicle" exemptions and you'll have the chance to ask those trucking questions that you can't seem to find the answers for anywhere else.

Presenting the seminar will be Kevin Rund who has specialized in farm transportation issues for the Illinois Farm Bureau for more than 30 years.

The seminar is free, but advance registration is requested. Please call 618-382-8512 to reserve your place at the On-the-Road Seminar.