

4th Qtr
2023

INDIANA LICA NEWS

INLICA STATE WINTER CONVENTION

**JANUARY 25TH-
27TH 2024**

Convention Highlights:
Thursday Evening CornHole
Tournament
Friday Afternoon Annual
Meeting and Evening
Awards Banquet and
Entertainment

Featured Comedian



Tom Ryan



LOCATION:

Convention will be held at the
Renaissance Marriott in Carmel, IN
11925 N Meridian St.
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A Word from our President

Greetings ALL as we head into 'the most wonderful time of the year'! I know many of you are still in full swing in the fields getting projects done in this, yet again, wildly mild December. Don't get too carried away with things though as we prepare for what follows this end of year. That's right, our IN-LICA winter convention. You all have surely seen this in your inboxes and now likely attached to this newsletter. Don't let time pass by on you during the end of year chaos! Get registered **today** for this educational and networking event. We will be at a new place this year in the crowned city of circles (Carmel) January 25-27. Don't let that trip you up any on your way in or around this area. There is plenty to do in a matter of minutes. You might even head over to Range USA and get a few rounds in one evening or come home with a new arm. And for those that wear out an arm a bit too much there, IU Health North is nearby too.

Have a SAFE Merry Christmas and a SAFE Happy New Year no matter how busy you are. Hold those families tight each night folks.

-Cheers
Joe Stull

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States Ahead of Nitrogen Reduction Goal

By Todd Neeley 12/13/23

The massive ongoing effort to reduce nutrient runoff across multiple states in the Mississippi River basin is beginning to pay off, according to a new EPA report to Congress on the work of the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force. Most notably, the task force said the basin has reduced nutrient runoff by 23% -- exceeding its nutrient reduction goal of 20% by 2025 set by the task force in 2008. However, the task force said total phosphorous loads have increased into the basin and ultimately to a hypoxic dead zone where low oxygen can kill fish and other marine life. It's caused by excessive nutrient runoff, largely from fertilizer used throughout the Mississippi River basin, which flows south to the Gulf.

The 12 states that are part of the task force include Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee and Wisconsin.

"More work is needed to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus by 48% to meet the Hypoxia Task Force's (HTF) 2035 goal," the task force said in its report.

Agriculture is always a focus of the dead zone because nutrient runoff from more than 30 states feeds into the Mississippi River. States now spend tens of millions of dollars every year on nutrient management strategies to reduce agricultural runoff into tributary streams and rivers.

The American Farm Bureau Federation said in a news release it was pleased with the work done by farmers in the 12 basin states. "There's still work to be done in the Gulf region and we stand ready to work with our partners at EPA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and within the task force states to continue the progress we're making," AFBF President Zippy Duvall said in a statement. AFBF said there are economic factors, including planted acreage and associated fertilizer demand, that can influence average nutrient load values within selected time periods. AFBF said it "encourages continued discussion" on preventing natural sources of phosphorous losses, such as streambank erosion. "Farmers are problem-solvers by nature, and the work being done in the Mississippi River Basin to reduce nitrogen loads in the Gulf region is proof of what can happen when we come together to find solutions," Duvall said. "I commend the farmers in each of the HTF states for their instrumental role in making these strides and encourage all stakeholders to continue working together to meet the 2035 goals."

According to the report, basin states continue to expand the amount of load discharge data available to monitor progress on runoff reduction. Across the 12 states, 86% of facility permits discharging to the basin were required to monitor both nitrogen and phosphorous runoff as of 2020. That's an increase from 70% in 2017,

The 1,232 facilities in the basin contributed 295.8 million pounds of nitrogen and 39.9 million pounds of phosphorus to nutrient loads in the basin. That represents a 2% reduction in nitrogen discharges from those calculated for 2017 and a 5% increase in phosphorous discharges from 2017 levels. "For context, USGS (Lee 2022) calculates that total MARB (basin) nutrient loads to the Gulf in water year 2020 were approximately 3.7 billion pounds of nitrogen and 452 million pounds of phosphorus," the report said. "This calculation shows that 8% of all nitrogen loads and 10% of all phosphorus loads discharging to the Gulf were from major sewage treatment facilities, compared to 9% of all nitrogen loads and 14% of all phosphorus loads in 2017." According to the latest forecast for the so-called "dead zone" in the Gulf of Mexico, the hypoxic zone was expected to be about 4,100 square miles this past summer. That was about 20% larger than 2022 but still reportedly smaller than average. Last year the zone measured about 3,275 square miles -- one of the smaller areas mapped since experts began tracking. The hypoxia area peaked in 2017 at 8,776 square miles.



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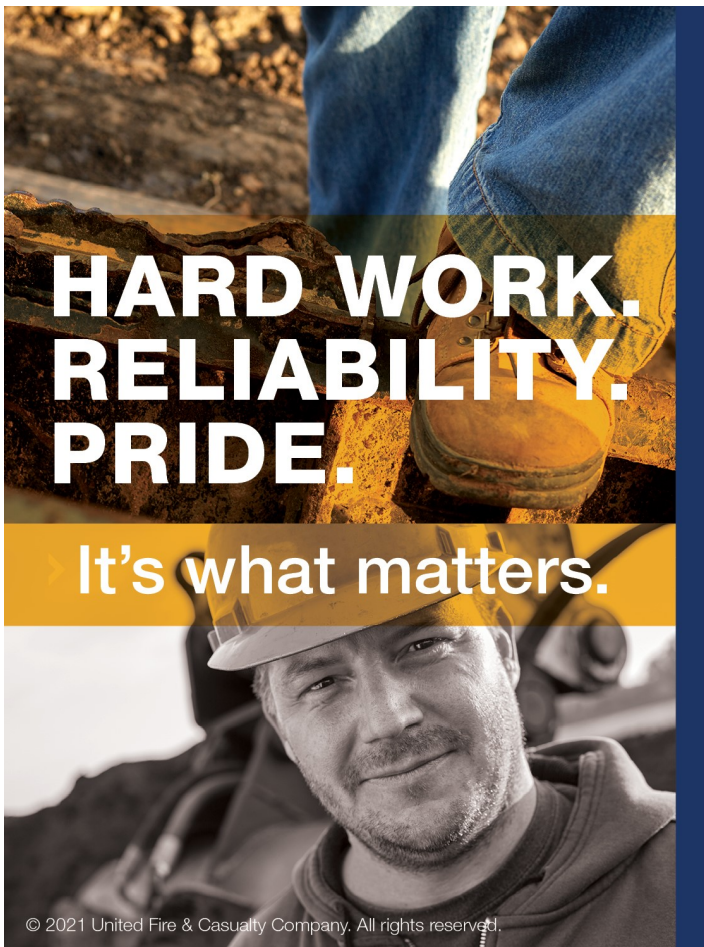
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2024 Convention Highlights

Thursday

CPR Training

NRCS Updates—New Pricing Survey

Bank Fraud—How to Protect Yourself

Trade Show

Associates Night Social

Cornhole Tournament

Friday

Cyber Security

Quickbooks

Trade Show

Annual Meeting

GPS Session

Social

Awards Banquet

Entertainment—Tom Ryan

Ladies Activity in the morning

The final schedule will be posted soon.

Additional session(s) to be added.

Be watching for more details



INLICA MEMBER/Spouse/Employee Convention Registration
Indiana LICA State Convention
Renaissance Marriott Indianapolis North, CARMEL IN
January 25th -27th 2024

Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, & Zip: _____ Phone: _____

ENTIRE CONVENTION

Per person, Includes All meals, Sessions, Exhibit Hall,
Awards banquet, Entertainment and Auction

Postmarked
January 10
\$175.00x

Postmarked
After January 10
\$200.00

Total Cost

Single Day Attendance: Per Person

*Thursday Day Program Only *Includes: Breakfast, Lunch & Sessions*

\$65.00x

\$70.00x

*Thursday Evening Only *Includes: Hors d'oeuvre's, Keg Beer and Cornhole*

\$55.00x

\$60.00x

*All Day Thursday *Includes: All of the Above*

\$100.00x

\$105.00x

*Friday Day Program *Includes: Breakfast, Lunch, Exhibits & Sessions*

\$65.00x

\$70.00x

*Friday Evening Only: *Social, Awards Banquet Meal & Entertainment*

\$65.00x

\$70.00

*All Day Friday *Includes all Friday activities*

\$100.00x

\$105.00

Children 4 - 10 yrs. 1/2 price, 3 and under free

TOTAL COST:

List Name of Each Person Attending:

YES, I will be attending the ladies activities _____ (Name)

YES, I will be needing a child (s) meal for the Thursday evening meal _____ (# of kids meals)

BE ON THE WATCH FOR MORE DETAILS REGARDING CONVENTION PROGRAMMING!

Conservation Plan Reduces Erosion and Increases Soil Organic Matter

By Dan Crummett 11/30/23

Don Veatch's interest in stewarding the land began when he was an elementary school student, and his mother helped him compose a winning personal-point-of-view conservation district essay. Veatch's premise opposed a proposal that would have flooded his family's central-Kentucky property on the site of a lake that had not existed since prehistoric times. "That's when I realized people could change things through their own actions," he explains. The proposed dam project never materialized, and Veatch and his family still farm the hard-to-manage heavy soils of the ancient lake bottom, locally dubbed "The Lagoon," near Lebanon -- about an hour's drive southeast of Louisville. "What I learned as a child during that public debate and my father's oft-quoted rule: 'Never allow a gully on the farm' has guided me throughout my farming career," he explains. Today, Don and his son, Josh, farm 600 to 700 acres in a no-till corn, soybean and wheat rotation, and manage another 300 acres of grass for up to 150 to 200 cattle, including their own commercial cow herd of 40 mamas. In addition, daughter, Kelsey Livers, has developed a "subscription-based" freezer-beef business featuring 100% on-farm finished cuts. Veatch Farms was recently awarded the Kentucky Leopold Conservation Award for 2023, given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, in recognition of extraordinary achievements in voluntary conservation and management of natural resources.

SWITCH TO NO-TILL

Fields here quickly become soggy in rainy periods, then become severely dry shortly after the rains stop. As a result, The Veatches adopted no-till in 1992 on double-crop soybeans behind wheat. Veatch says the experience, which was in response to an extended drought, worked so well, they quickly adopted no-till across all their cropland. They soon began noticing fields were much easier to farm. "Heavy rains infiltrate into the soil more quickly with field residue and crop stubble on the soil surface," he explains. "When the rains stop, that same residue continues to protect the topsoil from wind and water erosion, and helps maintain soil-moisture levels."

COVER IT UP

To further enhance soil health, the Veatches adopted cover crops on all of their fields 10 years ago to maintain living plant roots in the soil as long as possible throughout the growing season. The practice boosts soil microbiology in the root zone and shields the soil from wind and water erosion. Over time, cover crops also help increase soil organic matter. "We began to control erosion by no-tilling, but it wasn't until we included cover crops in our rotation that we saw improvements in organic matter (OM)," Veatch says. "Before cover crops, our fields tested in the 2% range for OM, but now we have soils testing over 3% in some fields, and the farm OM averages from one-half to one percentage point over where we began. "The cover crops also reduced soil lost to runoff from the farm into a creek that bisects the property. "Using continuous no-till stopped major erosion on our farm, but it wasn't until the cover crops that we stopped seeing even small gullies," Veatch explains. "The covers also help us scavenge any excess nutrients that might find their way into the waterways. "He says he's experimented with several cover crops but typically returns to winter wheat to protect his soils. "When you're trying to establish a cover behind cash crops harvested in the fall, it's difficult to get enough growth with many covers before the first freeze kills them," he explains. "Winter wheat, planted in the fall, works no matter what, and on part of our fields, it serves as a cash crop in our rotation." Veatch says yields over the past three years have averaged 90 to 100 bushels per acre (bpa) for soft red winter wheat; 55 for double-crop soybeans; 65 to 70 for full-season soybeans; and roughly 200-plus for corn. Another prime conservation -- and productivity practice -- displayed at Veatch Farms is managed rotation. Six pasture paddocks divided by electric fence containing round concrete spring-fed water tanks provide fresh grazing and water for the cattle. They rotate the herd to a different paddock roughly every month. This method provides forage from March through August, before the cattle are given access to the entire pasture through November. Hay produced on adjacent pastures fills the gap for winter feeding. To further lessen the ecological footprint of the cattle operation, the herd is excluded from the riparian areas of the farm's ponds and creeks, and restricted from timberland, watering only at the concrete watering points.

IMPORTANCE OF TREES

Veatch sees trees as both a renewable resource and conservation tool. He's planted timber along the curves of his farm's creeks to stabilize the soil and reduce flood damage. This timber complements the wide grass cover buffer strips he's established to control erosion near natural drainages. Existing timber on the farm is treated like a crop, with timber-stand-improvement practices limiting the growth of invasive species, allowing desirables such as oak, walnut and maple trees to share a larger portion of the forest canopy. Portions of the property's timber, as well as part of the grasslands, are enrolled in USDA's Conservation Stewardship Program to create habitat for wildlife, birds and pollinator insects.

CONSERVATION OUTREACH

The Veatches share their story of agriculture and land stewardship with their freezer-beef customers and by hosting field days. Veatch, who credits his conservation ethic to that long-ago grade-school essay, has been active with his local conservation district board since 1999. In a "full-circle" experience last school year, his granddaughter, Karli Veatch, wrote one of the winning essays in the district's contest.

2024 INLICA Tenure Awards

10 Year

Dallas Foster Accurate Laser
Grant Minnich West Side Tractor
Bryan Noggle United Fire Group

20 Year

John Pickering

30 Year

Mike Frey Northland Trenching
David Mohr

45 Year

Steve Landis

55 Year

Advanced Drainage Systems

15 Year

Jake Arthur
Joe Stull

25 Year

Bart Maxwell
Daniel Ramsey


35 Year


Kevin Hohman Hickenbottom Inc

50 Year

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Guilford Wehr Jr.

**These individuals/businesses, will be recognized at our Awards Banquet during convention.*

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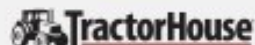
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'The Farm Lawyer' Discusses Tools for Farm Estate Planning

by Eric Pfeiffer December 15, 2023

Many farm policy organizations have been lobbying for years now that estate taxes should be permanently eliminated, opposing the collection of capital gains taxes at death. Legislation that provides exemption levels expires at the end of 2025, and some lawyers and estate planners are already talking about it.

"I call this the estate tax exemption repeal boogeyman, version 4.0."

That's "**The Farm Lawyer**," John Schwarz. He's a third-generation farmer and agricultural law attorney based in Cass County, Indiana. He says this because it's the fourth time in his 18-year law career that he's seen what he calls fear mongering from some in his industry about the estate tax.

"I hear things, and I see things where people are basically scaring people again, and in my opinion, to do things that, from an estate planning standpoint, that they may not do if it wasn't for this fear that somehow the estate tax is going to drop substantially, and all of a sudden, farms will be lost because of the estate tax."

Schwarz says if you have a good succession plan in place, have LLCs, or have taken other steps, you'll be in fine shape to react to what Congress may or may not do. If you contact a farm lawyer like him, there are options available, like yearly gifting.

"Each year, you can do some gifting. This year, \$17,000, you can gift: shares in companies, cash, things like that. You can start doing some small gifting, try to get some of the value out of your estate. A lot of times with the value of farm estates, that won't dent it as much as we need to. So we look at some of the other tools that quite frankly, really fit nicely into farm estate planning."

If you are interested in this full interview, you can find it at TheFarmLawyer.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 25th–27th 2024— INLICA State Winter Convention—
Renaissance Indianapolis North Marriott, Carmel IN

February 13th-17th 2024— National LICA Convention—Virginia Beach

June 13th & 14th 2024— National LICA Water Management Forum
St. Joseph's College, Rensselaer IN



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President Kron Details Top INFB Issues in 2024

By Andy Eubank December 19th 2023

Coming out of the Indiana Farm Bureau state convention, the legislative focus is clear for members and leaders of the organization. INFB president Randy Kron says they're energized to tackle issues in early January when the General Assembly convenes, and two of those rise to the top.

"Water is one of them that we've got on the front burner right now," he said. "The other one is a lot of proposals on tax reform we've actually put a task force together for both of those which is unusual to have two in one year like that but they're both so important and long-term precedents what happens in the impact on agriculture could be tremendous." The LEAP project in Boone County, which wants to withdraw water from the Tippecanoe County area, has been a catalyst for water quantity discussions.

"We're going to start with the task force," he said. "We're bringing in some thought leaders and trying to sort out and understand the policy. The leap district is what kind of kicked this off, but we understand there's water shortages other places around the state and if you start piping water, what's going to be the policy, what's the precedent, what happens if in 10 or 15 years there's a shortage where they're doing it. How do we change, what's the policy going to be, who are the winners and who are the losers really. So we want to make sure we get policy in place that, I would hope there's never a water crisis in Indiana but if there is we're not set in a policy in the middle of the crisis, we've got the framework to decide up front."

Kron shared with HAT he never dreamed years ago there would one day be water quantity concerns in Indiana.

"We've talked the quality side quite a bit, but when you have somebody wanting to pump 100 million gallons a day from one watershed to another, it makes you kind of set up and say okay what's the policy around it and how are we going to deal with it. And that's what I've charged the task force to look at. We brought some outside experts and hydrogeologist in to help us understand this so we know what we're dealing with. And part of what I think is going to be key is monitoring when they're pulling this water out to make sure if we're not recharging aquifers, we need to make decisions early, not when we're at a point of a crisis."

Indiana Farm Bureau will host the Legislative Forum to kick off the session in January. County leaders will have a chance to meet with Indiana House and Senate legislative leaders on January 9th at the Indiana Roof Ballroom.

Kron was happy to tout membership growth last week at the convention. It has now increased eight years in a row.

"It's been a slow, steady increase and that's what we've talked about," he said. "Let's just be steady and work at it year after year and we've been able to accomplish that. Proud of our volunteers and what they've done there, our staff and also the insurance team plays a very important part of the membership puzzle. So we thank all of them for their hard work."



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