

News Briefs

Campbell joins MFB as communications specialist

Nicole Campbell has been named the Michigan Farm Bureau's new legislative communications specialist and coordinator, taking over some of the responsibilities previously held by Doug Ewald. Ewald ended his 21-year career with MFB in April, retiring as public policy and elections specialist. For the past two years, Campbell has been employed by Julian Vail LLC, providing association management services for clients, including membership communications, event coordination, public and legislative relations, bookkeeping, and political action committee finance reporting. In her new role, Campbell will be responsible for assisting in the review, tracking and reporting of state legislation, and administering published communications regarding activities of MFB's State Governmental Affairs Department.

Free Alpaca Fest coming Sept. 20 to Birch Run

The Michigan International Alpaca Fest is Sept. 20 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sept. 21 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Birch Run Expo Center in Birch Run. The free event is open to the public. Alpacas are known to produce some of the world's finest, warmest fiber. The event will include spinning demonstrations, an auction and alpaca shows. For more information, visit www.alpacafest.org.

Great Lakes Hybrids promotes Doug Little to brand manager

Craig Newman, vice president of sales and marketing for AgReliant Genetics, recently announced that Doug Little was promoted to brand manager at Great Lakes Hybrids, which is a brand of AgReliant Genetics LLC, the fourth-largest seed company in the U.S. Before joining Great Lakes Hybrids in 2004, Little worked for Monsanto for 19 years in various sales management positions.

New rules in place Aug. 13 for bulk liquid fertilizer

The deadline for containing bulk liquid fertilizer is Aug. 13. Farmers must have a containment dike, mix-load pad and emergency plan, according to the Michigan Department of Agriculture, which will be conducting inspections of farmer facilities for compliance. Bulk storage tanks are defined as having a capacity greater than 2,500 gallons, or having a combined capacity of all tanks greater than 7,500 gallons, or mobile containers that store fertilizer on site for more than 30 days.

Jon Scholl named president of American Farmland Trust

The board of directors of American Farmland Trust has named Jon Scholl president to succeed Ralph Grossi, who will be stepping down after 23 years. Scholl, an Illinois farmer, recently served as counselor to the administrator for agricultural policy at EPA where he led the development of the first EPA National Agriculture Strategy advisory committee.



MODEL BARN: Val Berryman has served as curator of history at the Michigan State University Museum since 1967, the same year he received his master's degree from MSU. The museum currently has several model barns on display. This model shows a laminated rafter barn, made by nailing together layers of lumber to form a longer curved piece that could be used to support a large barn roof.

Small-scale barns hark back to past

By JENNIFER VINCENT

Editor's note: This is the first installment in a series of articles on historical agricultural items.

THE Depression changed the way many things were done and constructed in this country. Barns were no exception.

The Michigan State University Museum is featuring model barns that were created for state farmers in 1939 to educate them about new ways of building barns and agricultural devices.

"We obtained them from Ag Engineering, and originally thought they were used to teach students," says Val Berryman, MSU history curator. "To a certain extent they were, but we've learned that they were sent around the state and used by Extension and county and state fairs, allowing farmers to visu-

alize the designs."

In 1939, the Michigan State College Cooperative Extension and the Agricultural Engineering Department collaborated with the Works Progress Administration to produce the models. Seven of these barn models, scaled down from full-size barn blueprints, are on display at the museum through Aug. 24. They are part of the Federal Art Project exhibit on the main floor of the Heritage Gallery.

During the Depression, the models were a part of a larger Extension program that offered blueprints, farm visits, town meetings and construction assistance. Models and materials were also loaned to 4-H and Future Farmers of America for fairs and expos.

New ideas

Change is not always easy, but during the Depression, it was essential. According



GAMBREL ROOF: A gambrel roof barn has a slightly sloped upper portion and a more steeply sloped bottom portion. This style was more typical during the early 1900s in Michigan.



RAFTER CONSTRUCTION: If actual size, this chicken house would be 20 by 20 feet and hold 120 to 125 birds. It cost \$250 to build in the 1930s and '40s using laminated rafters created on the spot. The floor was laid first and then blocks used to form the shape of the rafters were nailed to the floor.



GOTHIC MONITOR: This style of building dates to the 1930s and 1940s, and used laminated rafters. This type of barn was affordable to build, adaptable to different types of animals, and had ground-level feeding and a hay storage area.

to an MSU ag engineering publication covering the Depression years, laminated rafters had been of interest to the department for some time, but they were not popular with the public until the Depression years.

Because small trees from the farm could be used for wood, laminated rafter barns were 50% to 75% less expensive to build. With the aid of the MSU Ag Engineering Department and a program developed by ag Extension specialist Art Bell, hundreds of buildings using the laminated rafter construction were erected in Michigan. MSU Museum has 60 model buildings, and feeders and other farm structures in its agricultural collections.

Berryman is looking to copy photos of the model barns being used at meetings or exhibits. Contact Berryman about the museum's collection of model barns or other agricultural heritage collections at berryma2@msu.edu or 517-355-0322.

The museum is on West Circle Drive, east of Beaumont Tower and north of the Main Library.



GOTHIC ROOF: This model shows the use of scaffolding in building the barn. Workers on the ground lifted rafters to others at the top of the scaffold, who would nail the rafters in place. About 50 people were needed to raise the barn.

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POSTMASTER: Please send address corrections to *Michigan Farmer*, 191 S. Gary Ave., Carol Stream, IL 60188.