

News & Community

Imaginative hay bale displays spotlight agriculture and community spirit

Staff Reports

This fall, agribusinesses, community groups, county Farm Bureaus, FFA chapters, 4-H clubs and individuals across Virginia created unique displays with hay bales to compete in Virginia Farm Bureau Federation's annual Hay Bale Decorating Contest.

In its ninth year, the annual competition gave communities an opportunity to celebrate their creativity while sparking conversations about farming and agriculture.

This year's contest drew a record 59 entries, with display themes that depicted farm animals, farmscapes, horticulture, farm machinery and Virginia-produced commodities.

"I'm delighted we received the most entries we've ever had for this competition, and the imagination and ingenuity everyone puts into the hay bale displays is always so impressive," said Faye Hundley, chair of the VFBF Women's Leadership Committee. "Not only are they a fun, creative outlet, but they also tell a story about agriculture and help connect communities with their farmers."

County Farm Bureaus were encouraged to solicit entries from local businesses and organizations such as farmers markets and school agricultural groups. Winners each received a \$100 cash award and a trophy and were recognized on the

VFBF Women's Leadership Program Facebook page.

The winners are:

- Community Spirit:** Smith Mountain Lake Christian Academy
- Junior category (age 8 and under):** Lane Smith of Warren County
- Most Creative:** Grayson County Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee
- Square Bale category:** Tazewell County 4-H Dog Club
- Stars of Agriculture category:** Rockbridge County Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee

With almost 135,000 members in 88 county Farm Bureaus, VFBF is Virginia's largest farmers' advocacy group. Farm Bureau is a non-governmental, nonpartisan, voluntary organization committed to supporting Virginia's agriculture industry.

For more information, contact Pam Wiley, VFBF vice president of communications, at 804.291.6315.

Annual Legacy Dinner to be hosted for Booker T. Washington National Monument

Staff Reports

The annual Legacy Dinner hosted by the Friends of Booker T. Washington National Monument

will be held Saturday March 23, 2024 at 5 p.m. at the W.E. Skelton 4H Center, located at 775 Hermitage Road in Wirtz. The gala features a dinner, silent auction, musical entertainment, and a guest speaker. Tickets are \$30 for members or \$35 for non-members. Tables for eight may be purchased for \$240. Membership and tickets will be available online at friendsofbookertw.org. by emailing friendsofbowa@gmail.com in January, 2024.

This year's guest speaker is Sarah Washington Rush O'Neal, the great granddaughter to Booker T. Washington. Her grandfather, Ernest Davidson, was the last born of Booker T. Washington's three children. Visit her web site at extraordinarylegacy.net for preview information.

Funds raised at this event support the mission of the organization and two annual scholarships to graduating seniors at Franklin County High School.

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