



# MOMENTUM

## Tiny Crop, Big Returns

Microgreens  
Fuel Growth at  
Farmboy Garden  
Page 10

## Meat Mania

Pandemic Panic  
Puts Pressure on  
Local Processors  
Page 6



We live where you do.

Fall 2020



# KEEP YOUR ENGINE FROM TANKING.

You want to get the most out of any diesel engine? Start by filling it up with BOSS Performance Diesel. BOSS keeps engines clean, improves performance and helps machines run more efficiently, longer. In other words, put good in, get good out.

**MADE TO  
WORK**

**BOSS**<sup>™</sup>  
PERFORMANCE DIESEL

**MFA OIL**  
*Petro-Card* **24**

Find our products  
near you by visiting  
[BossPerformanceDiesel.com](http://BossPerformanceDiesel.com)



# Contents

## Features

6

**Meat Mania**  
Pandemic Panic  
Puts Pressure On  
Local Processors



10

**Tiny Crop,**  
Big Returns  
Microgreens  
Fuel Growth at  
Farmboy Garden



16

**2020 MFA  
Foundation  
Scholarship  
Recipients**



26

**Ag Educators  
Series: Not Just  
Cows and Plows**

### In Every Issue

- 4 Letter From the CEO
- 5 Spotlight
- 14 The Big Picture
- 27 Giving Back
- 28 Delegate Profile
- 30 Market Commentary
- 31 News Briefs



### On the Cover:

Richard Leiweke and his family grow farm fresh vegetables and microgreens on their farm in rural Franklin County, Mo. *Photo by Keith Borgmeyer.*



# Adapting to the Circumstances

## THE 2020 MFA OIL ANNUAL DELEGATE MEETING

is going to look a little different this year. Rather than hosting a centralized meeting with hundreds of attendees at a conference center in December, this year's meeting is coming to an office near you and will be unlike any we have held in the past.

Like many other organizations, the MFA Oil Board of Directors and I felt it would be wisest to hold our annual meeting virtually this year so that our delegates can participate in a way that is both safe and easy. The meeting, which we were planning to hold in Columbia, Mo., is an important part of the governance of the cooperative and we carefully considered every option to conduct an in-person gathering. After reviewing our options and public health guidelines, we chose this alternate route out of an abundance of caution for the health and well-being of our delegates and employees. The meeting will now be presented via pre-recorded video presentation at designated local plant locations on Monday, Dec. 14, 2020.

While we will miss the opportunity to gather with our delegates, we will still be able to conduct all the business that would normally be part of the meeting, including elections for the MFA Oil Board of Directors. At the Sept. 3, 2020, meeting of the Board of Directors, a unanimous vote authorized the Delegates of MFA Oil Company to cast their ballots by mail for the following action items:

1. *Approval of the Minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting of Members;*
2. *Election of the co-op's District 2 Director (Northeast);*
3. *Election of the co-op's District 4 Director (Southeast);*
4. *Election of the co-op's District 7 Director (East Central).*

I realize this is all very different than how we normally go about our meeting, but don't worry. Every registered delegate will receive all meeting information by mail, including a reminder of the meeting date, the nearest location where the video will be presented, a copy of the 2019 Annual Meeting minutes and a ballot requesting approval of said minutes. Delegates in Districts 2, 4 and 7 will also receive a ballot for director elections within their district. We will provide self-addressed, postage-paid envelopes to make it as easy as possible for delegates to perform their duties for the cooperative.

While the presentations for the 2020 meeting will be made via video, I want to assure you that we have already begun planning for an in-person 2021 meeting in Columbia, and we are hopeful that we will be able to reconnect with our delegates in a more typical fashion next year.



Jon Ihler  
President and CEO



Jon Ihler



Fall 2020 • Vol. 5 No. 3

This magazine comes to you courtesy of MFA Oil Company, a farmer-owned cooperative providing energy solutions to customers for 90 years. We deliver high-quality propane, fuels and lubricants to farmers and other customers across an eight-state region stretching from Indiana to Kansas. *Momentum* is an information service for farm families, published by MFA Oil.

*Momentum* is published three times annually. For address corrections, story ideas or other inquiries, email [editor@mfaoil.com](mailto:editor@mfaoil.com) or call 800-366-0200.

 [www.facebook.com/MFAOil](https://www.facebook.com/MFAOil)  
 [www.twitter.com/MFAOil](https://www.twitter.com/MFAOil)

Address: One Ray Young Drive  
Columbia, MO 65201

**President and CEO**  
Jon Ihler

**Sr. Manager of  
Marketing Services**  
Ashley Bower

**Editor**  
Adam Buckallew

**Graphic Designer**  
Kristin Branscom

**Board of Directors**  
Marion Kertz (Chairman),  
Glen Cope, Tony Dameron,  
Monte Fisher, Scott Mitchell,  
Mike Moreland, Jake Taylor,  
Chuck Weldon

©2020 MFA Oil Company  
[www.mfaoil.com](http://www.mfaoil.com)



# Honoring Our Heroes

## Orscheln Farm and Home Helps Truck Memorial Wreaths to Veterans' Graves

### SINCE 2018, ORSCHELN FARM AND HOME HAS

participated in a coordinated volunteer effort led by nonprofit Wreaths Across America to deliver Christmas wreaths to military veteran cemeteries.

Each holiday season, an honor fleet of volunteer drivers and trucks carrying millions of ceremonial wreaths fan out across the country to deliver the wreaths to the final resting place of military veterans as a show of respect and appreciation. It takes hundreds of trucks to make the nationwide wreath-laying event a success, and Orscheln Farm and Home is one of many companies that help make the deliveries possible.

Orscheln Farm and Home has provided both volunteer drivers and one of its big rig trucks to haul wreaths to veteran cemeteries on National Wreaths Across America Day, which traditionally falls on the second or third Saturday in December. The last two years the company has picked up a truckload of nearly 6,500 wreaths in St. Louis and delivered them to five cemeteries in the Colorado area, according to Erle Bergstrom, transportation and private fleet manager for Orscheln Farm and Home.

"Colorado is outside of our traditional service area, but that's the area where Wreaths Across America needed help and we were honored to make the deliveries," Bergstrom said. "After we made the trip and talked with some of the service members' families at the cemeteries, it really put Wreaths Across America's mission into perspective."

The participation of Orscheln Farm and Home is made possible through a partnership between the company and several of the its vendors, including MFA Oil. This December will mark the third year Orscheln Farm and Home will participate in delivering wreaths and it's hoping to add a second truckload of deliveries in the Midwest in the near future.

Bergstrom, whose grandfather was a member of the U.S. Marine Corps in World War I and whose father served in the U.S. Army between the Korean and Vietnam Wars, said he became acquainted with Wreaths Across America at a national trucking convention.

"I was familiar with what they were doing, but it wasn't until I spoke with one of their representatives at the conference that I truly grasped the way Wreaths Across America touches the lives of so many Americans," Bergstrom said. "The way they honor those who have served, teach our youth the value of freedom, and memorialize our heroes is something that resonated with me and seemed like a great fit for Orscheln Farm and Home. So many of us have had a family member who has served in a branch of the military, and this is a great way to pay respect to our veterans."



Image from Wreaths Across America



Wreaths Across America believes the tradition of laying wreaths represents a living memorial that honors veterans, active duty military and their families. The aromatic balsam fir wreaths, adorned with a traditional red, hand-tied bow, are delivered to thousands of cemeteries across the United States where they will be laid upon the gravestones of U.S. armed service members. When placing the wreaths, volunteers are asked to say the name of each veteran out loud to ensure their memory is preserved.

The national wreath-laying endeavor is funded by donations from private citizens, companies and other organizations and realized with the help of volunteers from all 50 states and beyond. In 2019, Wreaths Across America and its volunteers placed 2.2 million wreaths on the headstones of our nation's heroes at more than 2,100 veteran cemeteries. [M](https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org)

**For more information about Wreaths Across America, including volunteer and wreath sponsorship opportunities, visit [www.wreathscrossamerica.org](https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org).**





# meat mania

**Pandemic Panic Puts Pressure on Local Processors**

Photos and Story By Jason Jenkins





As a boy, Mike Cloud anxiously anticipated the flip of the calendar page from June to July, and it wasn't just because of the ensuing Fourth of July holiday. While the parades and picnics, festivals and fireworks meant lots of fun for Mike and his sister, Karen, the arrival of July ushered in a different kind of independence day for the Cloud kids — freedom from the family's meat-processing business.

"Mom and Dad loved to fish," says Mike, who owns Cloud's Meats in Carthage, Mo. "We'd shut the plant down on the Fourth of July and head for the lake for two months. We'd open back up at Labor Day. Back then, there just wasn't any business in the summer."

Today, however, it's an entirely different story for Cloud and local meat processors across the Show-Me State. Turning pages in the calendar now reveals month after month of solid bookings from customers who wish to have cattle and hogs processed. It's the result of the global coronavirus pandemic, which sent disruptive shockwaves through all aspects of American life, including the U.S. food supply chain.

"Through the years, the meat industry has changed a lot, and really I thought it had changed all it could," Mike admits. "But that was before this spring and the spread of COVID-19."

### *Food Industry Impacts*

In the United States, it took the coronavirus less than two months to spread from the first confirmed case in Washington state to all 50 states. Seemingly overnight, schools, restaurants and non-essential businesses were shuttered, and Americans were advised to "shelter in place" in an effort to slow the virus. The resulting panic-buying stripped grocery store shelves bare as people tried to prepare for the unknown.

Yet at the same time that Americans were hoarding toilet paper and canned goods, another impact of the virus would

surface: the U.S. food system's inability to handle an abrupt shift in patterns of supply and demand.

The disruption manifested itself quickly as dairies were forced to pour milk down the drain, and vegetable growers had no choice but to plow under fresh produce. At the nation's large meat-processing facilities, labor shortages and measures to protect workers from the virus slowed production and even caused some temporary shutdowns.

As a result, the wholesale value of beef and pork increased sharply. According to data from the USDA's Economic Research Service, the "live-to-cutout-spread," which is the difference between the price paid for the live animal and the wholesale price of the processed animal product, reached an all-time record.

At the same time, there was rapid decline in the value of live animals. Poultry and hog producers were instructed to "depopulate" their barns, and a backlog of market-ready cattle began stacking up. While USDA data indicates that farm-gate prices for beef dropped by 5 percent from February to May, the wholesale price more than doubled.

"That's when our phone really started ringing off the hook," says Rob King, owner of King Processing and Catering in Marceline. "When the big guys sort of dropped the ball, people began to panic and started trying to get meat where they could find it."

The King family has been in the meat-cutting business since Rob's father, Dick King, bought the shop in 1980. The custom-exempt slaughter and processing facility employs seven, including Rob and his wife, Connie, who took over responsibility for the operation in 2003.

"We cut five days a week, and then we're open a half-day on Saturdays for meat pickup and carry-out," Rob says. "Beef is our main thing. We offer 21-day dry aging on beef. That's where the tenderness comes from."



In a typical week, the crew at King's processes 13 cattle and nine hogs. When pandemic panic led to higher prices and purchase restrictions on meat at grocery stores, the calls for sides of beef and hogs began pouring into the shop.

"I don't know anybody in the small processing business who has ever experienced anything like the upswing right now," Rob says, noting that coronavirus concerns have brought their catering business to a standstill. "We're booked for a year solid. We even have some animals booked into 2022 for processing. If you didn't have a reservation, there's no room at the inn, so to speak."

The story is similar at Cloud's Meats in Carthage, where the federally inspected facility began processing on Saturdays to keep up with demand at the same time that its catering clientele also disappeared.

"Overall, our business has prospered through this, which makes me feel kind of guilty," Mike says. "Agriculture is hurting right now, but we've held our prices on what we paid the farmers for their cattle and especially their hogs."

At Hetherington's Meat Processing in Clinton, owner Jim Hetherington, who works alongside his son, Jack, says they are cutting five days a week and processing more animals than ever. He admits he never dreamed that business would boom like it has in 2020.

"I was really kind of looking to retire in about a year, but now I don't know if that's going to happen," says the elder Hetherington. "We're booked out a little over a year. Instead of processing 15 or 16 beefs a week, we're doing 20 to 24, along with 12 to 15 hogs. With so many people wanting animals butchered, we're not aging beef past 14 days right now, simply because of space and to keep everything running smoothly."

### *Coping with COVID*

The influx in business during the past six months has prompted both King Processing and Hetherington's Meat Processing to discontinue a service that many, especially in rural communities, might take for granted: deer processing this fall.

"It'll be the first year since my parents started the business back in 1952 that we



TOP: Rob King, owner of King Processing and Catering in Marceline, Mo., says that while the coronavirus brought his catering business to a standstill, his calendar is booked for the next year with customers wishing to have cattle and hogs butchered. BOTTOM LEFT: Cloud's Meats in Carthage, Mo., offers custom processing and has a retail store where customers can select from a variety of cuts of meat. BOTTOM RIGHT: Vivian Dunn, an employee at King Processing and Catering, turns freshly ground beef into hamburger patties.

won't be doing any venison processing," Jim says. "We'll make sausage or snack sticks if they bring us deboned meat, but we have so much beef and pork to do, we didn't feel like we could stop."

Concerns over a resurgence in COVID-19 cases guided Rob's decision. "When we do deer, we shut all of the other processing down," he says. "If we do that, and the virus fires up and brings the world to a halt again, then we have nothing. If a guy had to make a choice, he is going to be able to cut up his own deer a whole lot easier than he can cut up his own beef."

In Carthage, hunters will be able to bring their deer to Cloud's this fall, Mike says. He notes that the decision by other meat cutters to forgo venison processing will impact his business.

"Right or wrong, we're accepting deer this year," he says. "We've never needed any more business during deer season. With others not doing it, it's going to mean lots of business."

Recognizing the need to increase meat-processing capacity within the Show-Me State, Gov. Mike Parson and Director of





TOP: Cloud's Meats employees, from left, Jacob Nelson, Ryan Costley and Ted Atnip, trim cuts of pork for a custom processing order. BOTTOM LEFT: Jack Hetherington of Hetherington's Meat Processing in Clinton, Mo., removes a rack of freshly smoked ham and bacon from the smoker. Jack and his father, Jim, say they are processing more animals than ever before. BOTTOM RIGHT: Pork trimmings are put through a grinder at Cloud's Meats before being turned into products such as bratwurst or sausage.

Agriculture Chris Chinn announced the creation of the Missouri Meat and Poultry Processing Grant in late July. This effort directs \$20 million in grants from the federal coronavirus rescue package toward small processors to bolster food supply chain resilience and avoid disruptions.

Federally inspected, state-inspected and custom-exempt processing facilities with fewer than 200 employees were eligible to apply for the reimbursement grants, which ranged from \$20,000 to \$200,000, depending on the facility and its operations. The deadline to apply was Aug. 31.

"They've put up some pretty good money to help with reconfiguration of plants, new equipment and a bunch of other stuff," Jim says. "We put together our wish list and submitted our application. I think we stand a pretty good chance of getting some money for upgrades."

### *Meeting Challenges, Serving Customers*

While the coronavirus pandemic has altered daily life and ushered in a "new normal," meat cutters like Cloud, King and

Hetherington are no strangers to change, especially in their industry.

"When my dad started, there were small farms all up and down the road, and there were small processing plants every 10 to 20 miles to butcher a beef and a hog or two for every family," Rob says. "Now, a lot of those little farms and families are gone."

Not only has the clientele changed, but so, too, have their tastes. Rob says he gets requests for specialty cuts that go beyond the traditional T-bone or pork chop.

"Just the other day we had a guy request belly bacon out of this calf. It was something he'd seen on a cooking show," he says. "The muscles on the animal haven't changed. It's the way you break them down, so you have to stay on top of those things."

While the muscles themselves haven't changed, the same can't be said for the animals brought in for processing. "When I started back in 1976, a big beef generally weighed 600 pounds," Jim says. "Now, 700 pounds is a small beef. We're consistently processing carcasses today that weigh 900 to 1,000 pounds."

Mike says another change is the disappearance of markets for by-products of meat processing such as leather, bonemeal and offal, which includes the entrails and internal organs.

"Back in the early 1960s, my dad would get paid \$400 a month for his bones and guts. Now, I'm paying \$2,000 a month to get rid of it," he explains. "We throw hides away because there's no money in them anymore, which is sad."

What has never changed, all three butchers agree, is their commitment to providing their local communities with a valuable service and trusted source of safe, healthy and affordable protein.

"It's not one of those industries where you're ever going to get rich, but you'll always be busy because people are always going to eat," Rob says. "It's just really about doing high-quality work that people are happy about. We're feeding people that were little kids coming in with their parents, and now they have families of their own."

"It's not glorious. It's not glamorous. But I enjoy what I do." **M**





**TINY CROP,  
BIG RETURNS**



# Microgreens Fuel Growth at Farmboy Garden

By Adam Buckallew

Photos By Keith Borgmeyer

Richard Leiweke was staring at a bag of pea seeds that was past its prime, and he was tempted to throw it out with the garbage because he had serious concerns about its ability to germinate. Years earlier he had read stories of people raising microgreens from the same type of peas, but he had dismissed the idea, fearing there would be no market in Missouri for such a trendy foodstuff.

“People here in the Midwest sometimes look at you funny when you bring up microgreens” Leiweke says. “They think that sounds like something for people who live on the East or West Coast.”

As Leiweke, a self-described tightwad, thought more about the bag of seed, he realized it would only take a minimal investment of garden soil to experiment with the miniature crop, so he moved forward.

The low-risk experiment has paid off for Leiweke and his family’s fresh produce business, Farmboy Garden, where microgreens now account for roughly 60 percent of sales.

## SMALL BUT MIGHTY

The seedlings of any edible vegetables or herbs can be used to produce microgreens. While microgreen is more marketing term than botanical distinction, it is commonly used to describe the tender foliage of young plants harvested at the cotyledon stage, typically seven to 14 days after planting.

These immature greens—typically shorter than the length of a credit card—are prized for their rich flavors, vibrant colors, crisp textures and strong nutrient profile. A 2012 study that assessed vitamin and phytonutrient concentrations across 25 varieties of microgreens found that almost all the microgreen leaves researchers examined contained four to six times more nutrients than the leaves of their fully grown counterparts. Certain varieties, like red cabbage, were found to have up to 40 times more vitamin E than the mature leaves of the same plant.

“Because microgreens are harvested right after germination, all the nutrients they need to grow are there,” says Qin Wang,



AT LEFT: Sunflower microgreens are typically ready for harvest within seven to 14 days of planting. The tender sunflower foliage has a crisp feel and nutty flavor. ABOVE: Richard Leiweke began raising microgreens to complement his farm fresh vegetable business.

an associate professor at the University of Maryland and one of the researchers who conducted the microgreen nutritional assessment. “If they are harvested at the right time, they are very concentrated with nutrients.”

Leiweke currently markets 14 varieties of microgreens including kale, peas, red cabbage, arugula, broccoli, radish, pak choi and sunflower shoots. He’s grown other varieties such as cilantro and beets, but those take longer to produce (four to six weeks), and he currently doesn’t have the space to handle those slower growing crops.

The first time Leiweke tasted microgreens, he couldn’t believe the flavor he experienced.

“I’m no rabbit,” he says while finishing a barbecue sandwich. “I don’t regularly eat a lot of salads, but the bold flavor you get from microgreens is incredible. If you were to try my carrot microgreens, you would swear you just ate a baby carrot that was dipped in sugar because it tastes so sweet.”

## SECOND ACT

Leiweke, who is 58, grew up on the same farm in Gerald, Mo., where he and his wife, Denise, now reside. “My dad called me one day back in 1994 and told me he was thinking of selling the farm,” Leiweke recalls. “I said, ‘No, you sold the farm’ and that was that.”





LEFT: The seedlings of almost any edible vegetable or herb can be used to grow microgreens such as these radishes. TOP RIGHT: A tomato crop grows in one of Richard Leiweke's four greenhouses near Gerald, Mo. BOTTOM RIGHT: Leiweke moves a pallet of the horticultural-grade soil he uses to grow his microgreens.

Leiweke routinely has on a pair of blue Big Smith overalls and sports a wispy white beard that frames a friendly smile. Though he dropped out of school after the seventh grade, he speaks eloquently and is a skilled tinkerer who has rigged a number of contraptions that have improved the productivity of his greenhouse operations.

"Everything I know I've figured out the hard way," he says with a grin.

The modified washer Leiweke built to clean his used microgreen trays can sanitize a flat in 30 seconds—a major improvement from the three per seven minutes he could manage when using a standard power washer. Timely cleaning is important for keeping the small business humming, and ensuring the containers start disease-free for the next crop.

Elsewhere in the greenhouse, a hopper—used to quickly fill flats with horticultural-grade soil in preparation for seeding—has been outfitted with a salt truck vibrator to break up clumps and keep the dirt filtering downward efficiently.

Though he grew up on a farm, Leiweke began his career in construction. For 28 years he worked as a general contractor before a series of heart attacks forced him to find a new occupation.

"My wife told me it was time to find a different line of work, and farming was really the only other thing I knew," Leiweke says.

He soon discovered his experience raising row crops with his father did not directly translate to his venture into growing farm fresh vegetables.

"The difference was night and day," Leiweke says. "We had a family garden when I was a boy, but this is a completely different experience. The pests are not the same and there are way more fungal concerns."

Step into the greenhouse where Leiweke tends to his microgreens, and you will hear the soft whirring of 16 overhead fans that run around the clock. The constant airflow is crucial to keeping mold and fungal pathogens at bay while the young seedlings grow.

Everything grown in Leiweke's four greenhouses is raised naturally. You won't find any herbicide or pesticide on the premises. The only thing applied to his crops above the soil is water—a selling point that resonates with grocery shoppers.

## GROWING DEMAND

Since its founding in 2014, Farmboy Garden has grown steadily, thanks in large part to the "accidental addition" of microgreens to its list of products. The retail price of the microgreens varies by grocer, but consistently sells for less than \$4 per 2-ounce container.

"We would still just be raising vegetables if we hadn't stumbled onto microgreens," Leiweke says. "The demand for microgreens has really ballooned and is growing considerably."





TOP LEFT: A leafy-greens harvester cuts a flat of radish microgreens. When Farmboy Garden originally started growing microgreens, they harvested by hand with scissors or hedge trimmers. BOTTOM LEFT: In addition to microgreens and vegetables, Farmboy Garden raises herbs like basil. RIGHT: Leiweke and his granddaughter, Danielle, prepare to harvest a flat of microgreen peas.

The Leiwekes still raise tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, yellow squash, bell peppers and basil, but they've scaled back their vegetable production significantly. Whereas they once grew five or six different types of peppers, they now sell a single variety.

While Richard has concentrated on microgreens, Denise has taken over managing the year-round vegetable operation and doubles as quality controller. "She doesn't let anything go out that we wouldn't eat ourselves."

Growing and harvesting vegetables commercially is labor-intensive, and the shift in focus to microgreens has allowed the Leiwekes to make better use of their workforce.

Finding good help is a challenge in rural Franklin County. The majority of Leiweke's crew of seven employees are above the age of 60, including his father, Jerry, who is 87. The Leiwekes have tried hiring younger workers but find they rarely stick, including four that were hired in the first half of August that didn't pan out.

Despite the hiring challenges, Farmboy Garden continues to grow thanks to establishing relationships with grocers like Frick's Market in Union, Mo., and Straub's in the St. Louis, Mo., metro area.

Leiweke's latest customer, natural food market Fresh Thyme, is currently offering his products in six stores and has expressed interest in broadening distribution to the chain's remaining 72 stores based on strong sales. That would require making deliveries to Fresh Thyme's distribution center in

the Chicago area—a job that would, at the moment, fall to Leiweke, who already spends the bulk of his time managing the company's logistics.

## EXPANSION PLANS

Richard rises most days by 3 a.m., which gives him time to talk with his brother and business partner, Mark, who's been working as a security contractor in Kuwait. The brothers video chat daily to discuss their business, its growth and plans for the future.

The Leiwekes are currently in the midst of finalizing plans to significantly expand their greenhouse operations, and build a packing facility and warehouse. The expansion, slated for construction in November, would double their number of greenhouses, creating more room for microgreens and two additional houses for tomatoes to cover year-round production needs. The added space will enable the microgreen prep and harvest area to be moved out of the greenhouses where Richard says they are "chewing up space that should be used to grow something."

Freeing up more room for plants inside the greenhouses will allow the Leiwekes to make better use of their limited climate-controlled spaces.

"When you run greenhouses, you want to maximize your square inches—not square feet," Richard says. "Every square inch in a greenhouse is critical." **M**





## » The Big Picture







# A New Look for Break Time

**SINCE 1985, THE LOGO FOR BREAK TIME** convenience stores has become instantly recognizable to many Missourians. With its bold lettering and fluid typeface, the logo has long complemented the brand's reputation for delivering friendly service. However, the opening of the newest Break Time store in Columbia symbolizes a new era for the company as it transitions to a redesigned logo.

The new logo features a red arrow paired with blue wording. The arrow visually represents Break Time's progress and vision for the future while the simple, yet bold wordmark gives the brand a fresh, modern feel.

The logo's official rollout at the new store on East Elk Park Drive in Columbia represents the start of a multiyear rebranding campaign for the chain, though this is not the first time it's been used. The new logo made its first appearance in 2017 when Break Time opened its Lee's Summit location.

"Since the Lee's Summit store was the only Break Time in that market, we felt it was an ideal test site," says Anita Bichsel, senior marketing manager for Break Time. "It gave us an opportunity to see our new logo in living color, so to speak."

When Break Time launched its MyTime Rewards loyalty program in 2017, it incorporated the rebranded logo's red arrow in its loyalty card design and the chain's fountain cups to familiarize customers with its new look. Plans are now underway to gradually begin updating the chain's storefronts and fuel islands at its more than 70 locations throughout Missouri. The transition to the logo across all channels will happen slowly over the course of several years.

Although the striking change in the new location's appearance has caught the attention of customers, Break Time's commitment to being a neighborhood destination for anyone on the go remains unchanged.

"Our goal is to make our customer experience consistent across all of our stores. We want our customers to know they can depend on Break Time to make their day better," Bichsel says. **M**

— BY KENNEDY WARD





# 2020

## MFA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Every year, the MFA Foundation distributes hundreds of thousands of dollars to high school seniors. The Foundation is a nonprofit, philanthropic organization jointly administered by MFA Oil Company and MFA Incorporated with the primary purpose of providing educational opportunities to youth located throughout the trade territories of the two companies. Since 1965, the Foundation has awarded scholarships to nearly 15,000 students, totaling more than \$16 million.

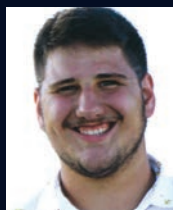
One scholarship is offered annually at each high school in whose town a participating MFA Agri Services Center, MFA Oil Company propane plant, MFA Oil Company bulk plant or other MFA agency is located. MFA Oil funds its contributions to the Foundation through unclaimed member equities.

Students interested in applying for a scholarship should contact their school counselor to see if one is offered in their area. Counselors obtain applications from participating locations. Local committees select the scholarship winners, who are announced at graduation ceremonies. The majority of the scholarships are \$2,000 and may be used at any college or university. This year, 325 high school seniors received a total of \$652,000 in scholarships.

Hayden Scott Alcorn, Sikeston  
Braden Thomas Alexander, Harwood  
Shyanne Janae Allen, Council Grove, KS  
Mack James Anderson, Dawn  
Annika Paige Anzjon, Carthage







Blake Joseph Arnold, Chaffee  
Monique Nicole Arroyo, St. Joseph  
Andrea Dawn Atchison, Eminence  
Clint Thomas Bailey, Curryville  
Nathanael Guy Baldwin, Sarcoxie



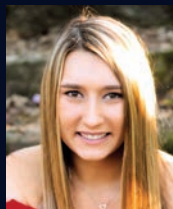
Ashley Nicole Ballinger, Bolivar  
Greta Rose Barr, Marshall  
Jackson Luke Beaman, Lincoln  
Riley Brianne Bell, Weldon, IA  
Brandy Nicole Belt, Bakersfield



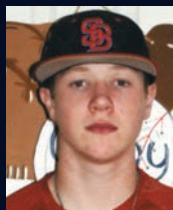
Kayla D. Bennett, Marshfield  
Caleb Aaron Bergfield, Anabel  
Mason Dale Berghaus, Farmington  
Madison Elizabeth Berhorst, Westphalia  
Jeanette Ila Berry, Green Ridge



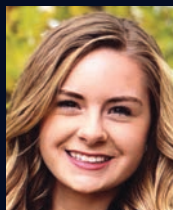
Talon Chance Besendorfer, Golden City  
Wade E. Binder, Salisbury  
Tyler Nicholas Bix, Sheridan  
Jacob Edward Bleich, Jamestown  
Sydney Rose Bock, Appleton City



Victoria Ann Bode, LaPlata  
Paul Jerome Boeckmann, Loose Creek  
Madyson RyAnn Bogart, Sheldon  
Samantha Ann Brandt, Linn  
Paige Marie Breeding, Vienna



Miranda Grace Breid, Madison  
Holly Anna Brennecke, Russellville  
Gregory James Brouwer, Osceola  
Caleb Parker Brown, Ava  
Coby Markray Brown, Humphrey, AR



Olivia Margaret Brune, Eolia  
Kate LeighAnn Burch, Walker  
Kristen Leigh Butrum, King City  
Kaleigh Beth Byram, Sheldon  
Katelin Ann Campbell, Memphis



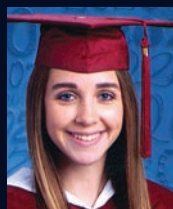
Karstyn Lea Cantrell, Collinsville, OK  
Alexia Jordan Caswell, Richland  
Summer LeeAnn Caton, Sedalia  
Christian Parag Chinchole, Tina  
Maecy Lashawn Claiborne, Urich



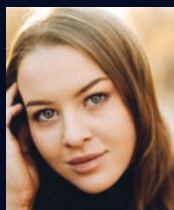
Halle Faith Clement, Skidmore  
Allison Dawn Clevenger, Billings  
Zoie Felice Cochran, Centerville, IA  
Amberlee Paige Coleman, Bolivar  
Madison Rose Coleman, Rhineland



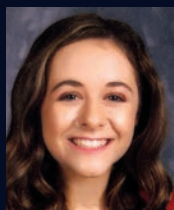
Ashtyn Brooke Colinger, Lexa, AR  
Addison Brooke Colvin, Fortuna  
Renee Sierra Conklin, Hallsville  
Dawson Ryan Conway, Salem  
Grace Marie Cook, Savannah



Kaitlyn Couchman, Corydon, IA  
Lucas Alan Coulter, Chilhowee  
Jae Christine Cowen, Joplin  
Makenzy Grace Crawford, Steele  
Gage Matthew Crews, Caraway, AR



Shaylen Elizabeth Crosswhite, Sedalia  
Trinity Shea Crouch, Olean  
Thomas Joe Crouse, Gallatin  
Morgan Elizabeth Crutsinger, Whitewater  
Jaelin Lee Daly, Bedford, IA



Chase Alan Charles Daniel, Arcola  
Kennedy R. Dankenbring, Waverly  
Bailey Lynn Darbyshire, Hartford, KS  
Madison Paige Darst, Aurora  
Beth Caroline Davis, Rock Port



Adrianna Marie Day, Pilot Grove  
Taylor Marie Deis, Gilliam  
Tanner Miguel Diaz, Steelville  
Jenna Lynn Dieker, Emporia, KS  
Sarah Danielle Dillon, Boonville



Montana Deanne Dorsey, Tipton  
Dixie Kay Dowell, Keytesville  
Allyssa Grace Downing, Huntsville  
Payton Danielle Drake, Norwood  
William Grant Durman, Seneca



Dalton Ray Dzurick, Houston  
Hala Christine Edquist, Mountain Grove  
Ashlyn Nicole Eisele, Perry  
Evan Thomas Eisenbath, Wentzville  
Elle Grace Ellis, Stanberry







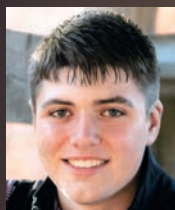
Collin Luke Emery, Mountain Grove  
Emily Grace Endecott, Cleveland  
Brendon Bradshaw Engeman, Montrose  
Devon Maleah England, Clearfield, IA  
Allison Marie Engle, Lancaster



Brie Elizabeth Ensor, Holliday  
Gavin Blake Epperly, Hartville  
Lyndsey Anne Ernat, Hamilton  
Madison Elizabeth Fancher, Huntsville, AR  
Jillian Hope Finney, Cainsville



Taylor Ranee Fisher, DeKalb  
Kalyn Rene Forck, Bethany  
Kiley Dawn Foster, Butler  
Isabelle Fox, Mount Vernon  
Ashley Nicole Freiburger, Verona



Bryce Anthony Friga, Pomona  
Jarret Alan Fuehring, Sweet Springs  
Cole William Fuemmeler, Armstrong  
Ryann Louise Gander, Shelbyville  
Hannah Elizabeth Garcia, Newtown



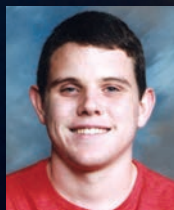
Kayla Marie Gentry, Malden  
John Taylor Gerhold, Kirksville  
Jacob Daniels Gilbert, Montgomery City  
Tiffany Lynn Gilbertson, Gilman City  
Kelly Elise Gillespie, Fulton



Ashlynn Kay Gilpatrick, Eagleville  
Pamela Sue Jaden Goedeke, Carrollton  
Brogan James Gore, Lexington  
Travis Glenn Gorrell, Canton  
Jaycee Mae Graves, Fairfax



Breanna Renee Grgurich, Novinger  
Mallory Peyton Griffin, Doniphan  
Emily Elizabeth Grither, Saint Mary  
Bailey Madison Groves, Billings  
Joshua Williamson Hambrick, DeValls Bluff, AR



Reesa Ray Hampton, Marmaduke, AR  
Cooper Daniel Harris, Piggott, AR  
Nicole M. Hart, Charleston  
Camden Charles Hartley, Mercer  
Ryan Lee Hartness, Paragould, AR



Shelby Diane Haskins, Purdy  
 Madison Arlenia Hays, Everton  
 Allison Anne Heim, Moran, KS  
 Zachery Neill Held, Franklin  
 Erin Michelle Helmig, Belle



Seth Austin Thomas Herriman, Bucklin  
 Ethan Scott Hilgedick, Hartsburg  
 Emma Grace Hinson, St. Clair  
 Madison Carly Hoffman, Archie  
 Meagan Elizabeth Holtmeyer, New Haven



Savanah Dawn Hopkins, Stilwell, OK  
 Kori May Hornaday, Unionville  
 Weston Zane Horner, Corning, AR  
 Makayla Abigail Hostettler, Weaubleau  
 Brinkli Halzden House, Edgar Springs



Kandace Mischele Josephine Inskip, Bevier  
 Zoe Lou Isaacson, New Cambria  
 Kelly Renee Ivy, Benton  
 Abigale Eileen Jackson, Lebanon  
 Alyson McComas Jackson, Osborn



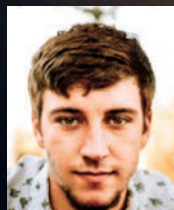
Elise Renee James, Mindenmines  
 Elizabeth Augusta Jenkins, St. Joseph  
 MaKenna Paige Johnson, Ash Grove  
 Hannah Anne Johnson, Miller  
 Ira Amos Johnson, Jameson



Hannah Grace Junkans, Henley  
 Tate Ray Kamper, St. Clair  
 Regina Marie Kemna, St. Elizabeth  
 Eryn Macia Kemper, Barnard  
 Reagan Colleen Kennon, Stockton



Kyle James Kiefer, Saint Mary  
 Jordan N. Kirk, Fordland  
 Abigail Elizabeth Klaiber, El Dorado Springs  
 Kaul McArthur Kleeman, Miller  
 Jackson Alexander Kleiboeker, Stotts City



Ethan Michael Koenig, Farrar  
 Jenna Rose Korff, Norborne  
 Dawson Mitchell Kouril, Higginsville  
 Beau Thomas Kraft, New Boston  
 Becky Ranae Kropf, Westphalia, KS







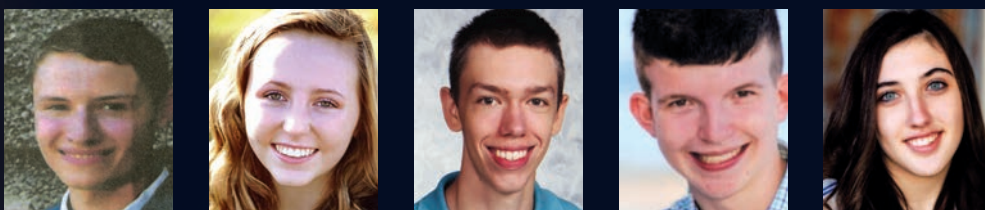
Hayden Jonathan Krumpelman, Marceline  
Abby Marie Kurz, Lonoke, AR  
Josie Lea Lansdown, Mansfield  
Courtney Brianne Leape, Camden Point  
William August Lee, Truxton



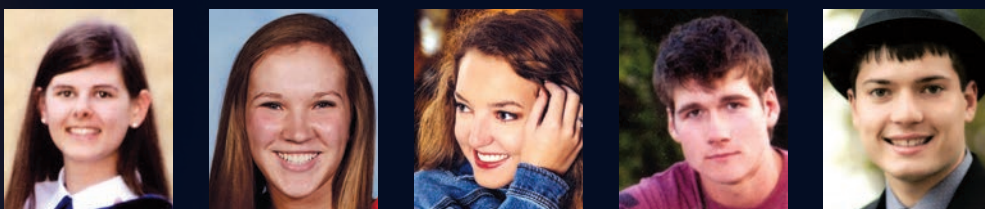
Chloe Ruth Lewellen, Dewitt  
Dallas Ryan Lewis, Centralia  
David William Ley, Washington  
Alexander Igorevich Lisovsky, Foley  
Charlotte Ann Lloyd, Windsor



Christopher Lee Logan, Cross Timbers  
Cash McCade Long, Keota, OK  
Grant Christian Louiselle, Stover  
Dylan Justin Loveday, Wynne, AR  
Jackson Ryan Lundberg, Palmyra



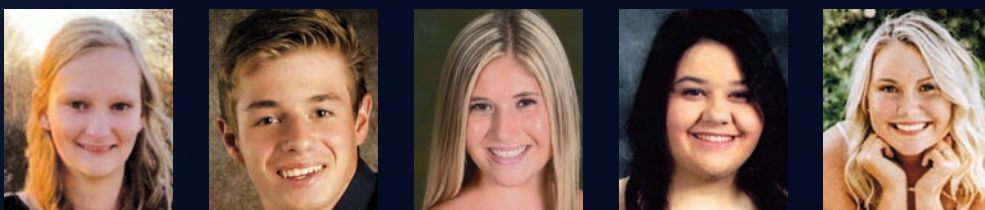
Trevor R. Madison, Rosendale  
Madison Ann Madore, Center  
Daniel Maurice Mallinckrodt, Augusta  
Tate M. Malter, Marshall  
Erin Saige Marquis, Clio, IA



Ashley Eilleen Mattson, Conception Jct.  
Hailey Marie McCommon, Pleasant Hill  
Hannah Jo McDaniel, Pattonsburg  
Jacob Kole McEnaney, Tarkio  
Clinton Allen McGill, Dadeville



Madelyn Brooke McGrady, Pittsburg  
Grace Hamilton McHenry, Kirksville  
Reed Jaxon McIntyre, Ravenwood  
Grant Logan McMillen, Walnut Grove  
Sianna Scott Meadows, Mound City



Logan Brooke Meyer, LaGrange  
Sam Boyd Middleton, Vandalia  
Kaia Le'Nee Miller, Purdin  
Lindee Jayne Mitchell, Cassville  
Terra Jolee Mitchell, Stroud, OK



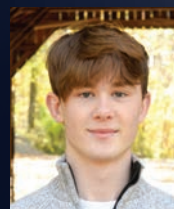
Seth James Mitchem, Chamois  
Joanna Elizabeth Moody, Aurora  
Lexi Vincent Rose Moore, Burlington Jct.  
Andrew Robert Moore, Kahoka  
Kyndal Riley Moore, Poplar Bluff



Taylor Marie Morgan, Tecumseh  
 Brianna Rose Munsterman, Warrensburg  
 Noah Andrew Murray, Deepwater  
 Abby N. Nail, Orrick  
 Dalton James Naile, Highlandville



Mary Ruth Cathleen Nauman, Union Star  
 Amber Lynn Nichols, Laddonia  
 George Carr Niemeyer, Curryville  
 Alannah Kay Nowak, Odessa  
 Mason Quinn Nunamaker, Columbia



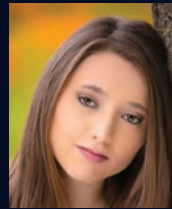
Logan Mathew Oborny, Durham, KS  
 Olivia Katlyn Owen, Maysville  
 Grae Crisler Palmer, New Madrid  
 Carmyn Gail Parrish, Marked Tree, AR  
 Travis Michael Patrick, Urich



Madison Rose Peavler, Elmer  
 Garrett Matthew Peck, Columbia  
 Jandie Ann Peterson, Trenton  
 October Grace Peterson, Albany  
 Landon Ray Petree, Bunceton



Danielle Antoinette Pfanner, Monroe City  
 Brice Eugene Phelps, Elston, IA  
 Mackenzie Kaye Porter, Harrisonville  
 Cheyanne Paulie Grace Poterbin, Halfway  
 Rillie Lynn Ratliff, Trenton



Kaitlyn Ross Rechtermann, Polo  
 Blaine Michael Reed, Bland  
 Danel Justeen Reese, Farmington  
 Josie Ann Reeter, Chillicothe  
 Molly Elizabeth Renshaw, Maryville



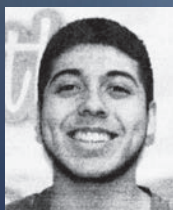
Grace Evelyn Rhodes, Troy  
 Grace E. Richards, Yale, OK  
 Kirby Leigh-Ann Richards, Gilliam  
 Natilee Lynn Richardson, Clarksdale  
 Jensen Eldred Riffel, Lincolnville, KS



Lauren Elizabeth Robinson, Wellsville  
 Hallie Kalen Robinson, Steele  
 Jaylyn Marie Rogers, Hume  
 Clark Strobel Rohrbach, Jamestown  
 Jillian Alexis Rojas, Gideon







Alexis Roman, Milan  
Morgan L. Rope, Clarinda, IA  
Madison Lynn Michelle Roth, Arbyrd  
Devany Salas, Senath  
Nathaniel Fredrick Schieber, Ravenwood



Bethany Noel Schmidt, Macks Creek  
Emmy Elizabeth Schmidt, Sullivan  
Lacy Clarke Schoneboom, Mexico  
Kaylin Rose Schuessler, Uniontown  
Remington Leigh Schultz, Centralia



Aubrey Elizabeth Scott, Hepler, KS  
Elizabeth Ann Scott, Scammon, KS  
Jerren Micol Edward Sears, Hale  
Kolson Thatcher Seay, Salem  
Preslee Cierra Sharpe, Paragould, AR



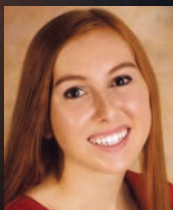
Lauren Nicole Shinn, Uniontown, KS  
Madison Mae Shipley, Milo  
Kyle Brenly Six, Adrian  
Levi Skocy, Rich Hill  
Valorie Christie Slack, Holden



Gracie L. Smith, Buffalo  
Isabelle Kaylee Smith, Mountain View  
Tabitha Rose Smith, Newburg  
Addison Paige Snider, Sweet Springs  
Caleb Brant Snodgrass, Owasso, OK



Taylor Nichole Snyder, Carthage  
Gracie Paige Sohn, Lonedell  
Braylon Wayne Spears, Hartshorne, OK  
Ivy Zadia Spieker, Purcell, OK  
Merrideth Grace Spiers, Grant City



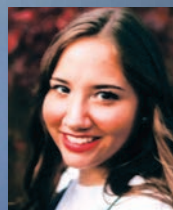
Kaylee Marie Sportsman, Brookfield  
Camryn J. Stanfield, Bernie  
Grace Sue Stark, Philadelphia  
Dylan J. Stewart, Monette, AR  
Amelia Anna Stone, Lockwood



Mikayla Ann Storck, Concordia  
Skyler James Storie, Conway  
Briel Aspen Storm, Derby, IA  
Dustin Bradley Strawn, Columbia  
Kaylie Rae Stufflebean, Laclede



Faith Madison Sullivan, Naylor  
 Logan Kathleen Marie Thies, Armstrong  
 Teah Kathryn Thomason, Birch Tree  
 Emily Rose Thompson, Beaufort  
 Katherine Isabella Thompson, Otterville



Aleece Nikole Thornhill, Clark  
 Emily Grace Thornton, Noel  
 Konnor Lucas Tidman, Amoret  
 Hannah Alexis Tillery, Licking  
 Guy Russell Timbrook, Lentner



Nathaniel Scott Brown Tomlinson, Chillicothe  
 Jacob Dwayne Toombs, Bolivar  
 William Dane Uchtman, Gainesville  
 Camie Renee Vaughn, Cainsville  
 Cassie Paige Vestal, Conway



Cadie Elizabeth Violette, Novelty  
 Makenzie Lee Vogelsmeier, Sweet Springs  
 Lane Noah Volkman, Bourbon  
 Jacob Wayne Vossler, Boonville  
 Ellie Jo Walker, Pottersville



Kasey Lee Waterman, Wheeling  
 Leah Marie Weaver, Fair Grove  
 George J. Weber, Lamar  
 Maggie Dawn Wells, Cabool  
 Jacob Riley White, Centerville



Dalton Wade Whittle, Crocker  
 Brooke Emily Wiggins, Sparta  
 Colin Ross Wilburn, Laddonia  
 Jake Paul Williams, Marshfield  
 Katlyn Nicole Williams, Odessa



Reagan Laine Williams, Strafford  
 Elijah D. Wilson, Crane  
 Gwyneth Ann Wood, Clarksburg  
 Haze Patrick Wright, Ozark  
 Grace Isabel Yerington, Neosho



Lerran Kale Yoder, Warsaw  
 Hanleigh Morgan Young, Lebanon  
 Karsyn Rae Youngblood, Columbus, KS  
 Jesse Curtiss William Yount, Jackson  
 Emily Reana Zimmer, Mora







**THEY DON'T CALL IT  
WORK HORSE FOR NOTHING.**



**Run with the oil too proud to quit  
before the job is done.**

Pouring the latest technology, advanced additives and 90-plus years of expertise into every quart, Work Horse® begins by exceeding original equipment specs. We follow up with unrivaled customer support in testing and maintenance. The result: A new breed of oil powered by the same work ethic that pushes you.



[WorkHorseLubes.com](http://WorkHorseLubes.com)



# NOT JUST COWS AND PLOWS

Dean Reichel, ag teacher and FFA advisor at New Bloomfield R-III, goes above and beyond to make a difference.

That's a cliché in today's cynical age, but it's true in his case. He's making lesson plans for eighth to 12th grade ag education classes that, thanks to COVID-19, he knows may never happen, and coaches a dizzying array of FFA activities from public speaking to trap shooting to equine science.

Reichel says FFA is like a tent: "There's a lot of room for everyone, no matter what your talents, background or inclination." Some of his students find FFA overwhelming, he says. "But the ones who put something into it, who take that extra step outside their comfort zone, find a lot of satisfaction. That's why we do what we do."

Take recent graduate Heath Brandt, an FFA Proficiency in Equine Science winner who also entered an extemporaneous public speaking contest this past spring. His topic: Whether plant-based meat products should be marketed alongside traditional beef and dairy products (he argued yes). And he won.

Eloquence helps, but Brandt says Reichel helped him prepare for four years by teaching him "how to be confident and believe in my natural ability for communication ... He gave me the resources and tools to be competitive and encouraged me along the way, although he has helped prepare me for life even more. His lessons in the classroom have been far trumped by the lessons of life he has shared with me over the years."

Reichel has been so influential that Brandt started this fall as an agriculture education and communications major at the University of Missouri.

Then there's 2018-20 FFA chapter president Kalyn Davis, a national 4-H shooting winner. Davis was in a horrible car accident in August 2019 that resulted in her being airlifted to the MU Health Care Level I Trauma Center. Her family was saddled with crushing bills.

Reichel, the local and statewide FFA, and community responded with fundraising efforts that yielded about \$8,000. "An amazing thing for a little school like ours," Reichel says. "One of the cool things about living in a small rural area is that people pull together." Davis has now recovered.

Reichel also inspired her to pursue the same career path at Mizzou. "The dream is to one day follow in his footsteps and be half the teacher and role model he is!" she says. "He truly molds his teaching style to each individual student. He is the teacher you can count on for absolutely any and every problem that may arise and pushes each of his pupils to strive for greatness. He's a wonderful motivator."

Finally there's the food pantry near the high school's entrance. The idea originated with FFA alumni and New Bloomfield R-III School District Superintendent Sarah Wisdom, who also stocked it. Reichel, his class and the FFA built it (that would be his Ag Power Technology and Mechanics class). The need for a food pantry in the area is very real, Reichel says.

"Dean is such an asset to our students and district," Superintendent Wisdom says. "He makes connections with students and helps guide them in a direction that will impact their future. Yes, the pantry was my idea, but Dean and his students made it a reality."

"It's not just cows and plows anymore," Davis says of FFA. "It's learning about



TOP: A food pantry built by students of Dean Reichel, ag teacher and FFA advisor at New Bloomfield R-III, and stocked by District Superintendent Sarah Wisdom and the community. BOTTOM: Reichel and Kalyn Davis, New Bloomfield FFA chapter president from 2018-2020. When Davis was in a serious car accident requiring extensive hospital care, Reichel, FFA and the community responded with a generous fundraising effort. "One of the cool things about living in a small rural area is that people pull together," Reichel says.

leadership as well as skills that you can use in the real world, in your future career." This is exactly what Reichel has shown his students. **M**

— BY NEAL FANDEK

Agriculture teachers are vital to developing their students' understanding and appreciation for the agricultural industry. In recognition of their important role, MFA Oil is profiling the amazing work ag teachers do to prepare the next generation of leaders in agriculture.



# Connecting in the Time of COVID

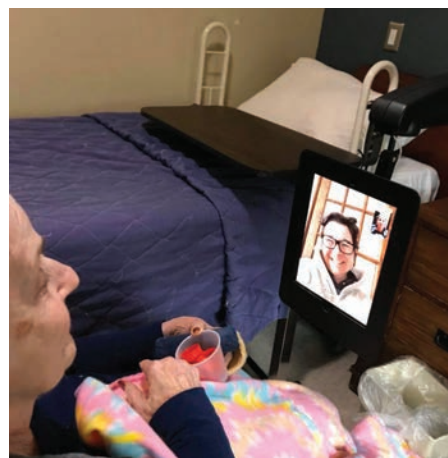
## AT THE OUTSET OF THE

pandemic, many people bunkered down in their homes and self-isolated for safety. Nursing homes and long-term care facilities, where many occupants are elderly and have chronic medical conditions, banned visitors to protect the health of their residents. While the seclusion helped keep the virus out of facilities, it also cut residents off from family and friends.

“That was a struggle for our residents,” says Nabrina Shanks, director of life enrichment at The Bluffs nursing home in Columbia, Mo. “Many of our residents are used to having family visit them every single day. When COVID hit, it completely changed the dynamic of their social and emotional well-being.”

Like many nursing homes, The Bluffs turned to technology to help residents reconnect with loved ones. The facility had two older tablets prior to the pandemic, but they were so old they couldn’t support video chat technology. A grant from the MFA Oil Foundation helped The Bluffs purchase new tablets, which Shanks said gave residents an opportunity “to connect with their families again,” and much more. Residents have used the tablets to participate in online church services, chat with doctors, and even virtually attend weddings.

Aging Best, which serves central Missouri residents age 60 and above, was another organization that received an MFA Oil Foundation grant for tablet purchases. Melissa Schulte, a network coordinator with Aging Best, says as older adults have self-isolated to stay safe, there been an increase in loneliness and depression. The tablets Schulte’s agency was able to buy has given the people they serve opportunities to connect with grandchildren, other family members and friends through video calls.



Nursing home residents at The Bluffs in Columbia, Mo., have used video chat technology on tablet computers to reconnect with family and friends during the pandemic.

“It means so much for people to be able to see loved ones laughing and smiling,” Schulte says. “They do not have to miss out on special moments with the people they love.”

Aging Best did not have any tablets or other technology for its clients to make video calls prior to the pandemic, and Schulte says she and her co-workers are excited to provide ways to help older adults combat social isolation. She says many of the older adults she works with, especially those in rural areas, do not have access to technology, and may not be comfortable using a smart phone or social media.

“The tablets allow them to see the faces of those they miss and experience a deeper connection than they can achieve with a telephone call,” Schulte says. “It is easy for older adults to lose touch with the community and current events when they do not have access to technology. The tablets give them an opportunity to stay connected and cope with the effects of social isolation.” **M**

**The MFA Oil Foundation provides cash grants to nonprofit organizations that are working to improve communities where MFA Oil has a significant concentration of members and employees. In June, the foundation approved \$9,500 in grants to five different organizations.**

Adair County R-II School District –  
Brashear, MO

Laclede Literacy Council –  
Lebanon, MO

Sheridan Fire Protection District –  
Sheridan, MO

Aging Best (Central Missouri Area  
Agency on Aging) – Columbia, MO

The Bluffs – Columbia, MO



# Dual Day Jobs

## WHEN IT CAME TO PICKING A

profession, Joe Kleeman of Braymer, Mo., couldn't settle on just one.

"I always had a love for veterinary medicine but also for farming in general—from livestock to row crops," he says. "So, I did both."

A half-century ago, Joe hung out his shingle as a veterinarian. In the years since, he also built a thriving, diversified agricultural enterprise that today includes all four of his sons: twins Matt and Mike, Kurt, and Kip. Together, they manage a roughly 2,500-acre row-crop operation and a 450-head Angus-based cow/calf operation across Caldwell, Livingston, Carroll and Ray counties.

The eldest Kleeman grew up in southwest Missouri on his family's farm, raising row crops alongside beef cattle, sheep, hogs and turkeys.

"We were way out in the middle of the country," he says. "Our address was Golden City, but we lived closer to Lockwood. I graduated from high school in Miller in 1962."

Joe enrolled at the University of Missouri in Columbia where he'd stay for the next eight years — first earning his bachelor's degree from the College of Agriculture, followed by his doctorate in veterinary medicine.

"There was an opening in Braymer for a vet, so my wife, Margaret, and I moved to Caldwell County," Joe recalls. "The year after I started, we purchased our first 70 acres just southeast of town."

As the farm grew, Joe brought other veterinarians into the practice. In the 1980s, he turned over the day-to-day activities to his partners and focused on providing veterinary services at local sale



barns. This allowed him to devote more time to farming and family.

"Today, we're primarily no-till, growing mostly corn, soybeans and wheat," Joe says. "We utilize cover crops for soil health, erosion control and livestock forage and grazing. We also do some custom forage harvesting."

Joe left the veterinary practice in 2010. In his 30 years as a vet, he saw many changes in livestock—the largest being the near-complete disappearance of the dairy and pork industries in the area. "There's probably just as many beef cows, but they're in fewer hands," he adds.

While Joe's service as an MFA Oil Company delegate began in 1980, his relationship with the company extends back to his childhood. The 75-year-old has fond, vivid memories of the bulk delivery truck making its regular stop at the Kleeman farm.

"Back in the 1950s, I can remember the driver filling our fuel tank and then taking a 55-gallon barrel of oil from the truck's side compartment and rolling it over to our barrel stand," Joe says. "He always had a stick of gum for us young ones. It was usually Wrigley's Spearmint or Juicy Fruit."



Today, the Kleemans continue to use MFA Oil products on the farm, including fuel, oil, lubricants and propane.

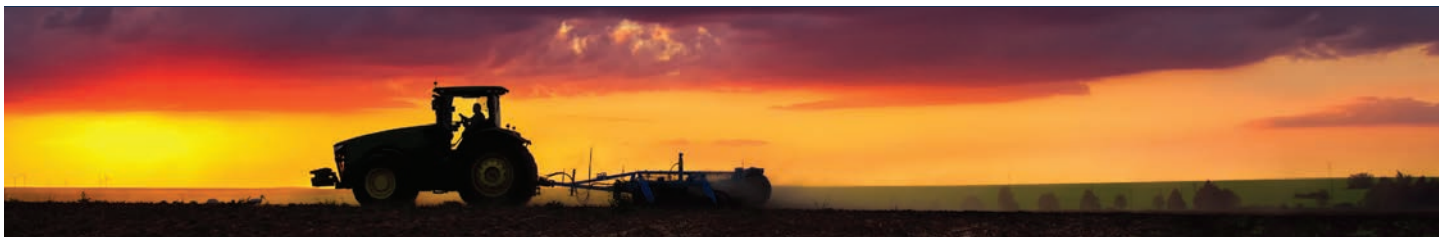
"During my lifetime, we've always counted on the company's products. They were the best when I was a kid, and they're some of the best products now," Joe says. "We haven't had any issues, and the service the company provides is top-notch."

Having family close by has been a blessing, Joe says, especially in the years since Margaret passed away in 1998. He survived a battle with colon cancer in 2011 and now watches as his five grandchildren grow up loving what he loves: family and farming.

"They're all interested in farming, both in the livestock and the row crop," Joe says, noting the grandchildren range in age from 5 to 15 years old. "A couple of them can already operate machinery darn near as good as I can. We're going to offer them the opportunity to farm and allow them to make their own decisions." **M**

— BY JASON JENKINS





# TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR INPUT COST

Guarantee your fuel price and forecast your expenses, with NO MONEY DOWN!

## LOCK IN. LOAD UP.

Take the guesswork out of budgeting your gasoline and diesel fuel needs. Lock in your price when the market is in your favor – and load up on savings later, when the price goes up.

Choose your  
fuel type.



Choose your  
amount.



Choose your  
delivery method.



With Fixed Price and Max Price contracts available year-round, MFA Oil's Fuel Contracting Program will help you gain control of your fuel costs.

**Contact us today to learn more!**

\*Customer's account must be in good standing. Credit approval required.

# SHARE THE LOVE. REFER A FRIEND AND YOU'LL BOTH GET \$50.



As a current MFA Oil account holder, you can earn a \$50 MFA Oil gift card for every new propane customer you refer. There is no limit! And, not only will your friends enjoy friendly, reliable service, they will get a \$50 gift card too!



Call your MFA Oil Propane office  
or visit [www.mfaoil.com](http://www.mfaoil.com) to get started.

Some restrictions apply. Contact your MFA Oil Propane office for details.



# Now What?

**AFTER THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC CAUSED A** precipitous decline in WTI crude prices that saw oil futures take an unprecedented dip into negative territory, it's fair to wonder what we can expect moving forward. Will there be a so-called new normal for energy prices, or can we expect more of the same? Personally, I think we should count on continuing volatility.

At the time the pandemic caused energy prices to crash in mid-March, total U.S. crude stocks stood at 455.36 million barrels. As I put the finishing touches on this article on Sept. 22, total stocks now stand at 492.426 million barrels—a gain of 69.784 million barrels compared to stock levels at the same time last year. Gasoline stocks are up 228.182 million barrels and distillate stocks are up 172.758 million barrels.

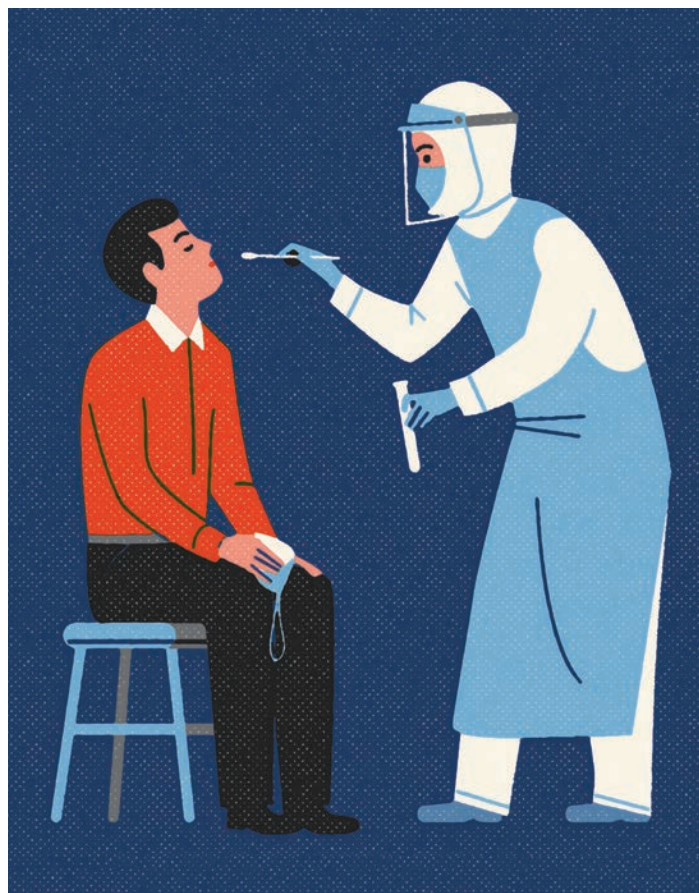
The increasing stockpile of fuel is one of the issues I've been struggling with as I try to gauge where the market may be headed. These numbers indicate an abundance of supply, and I would assume that will put pressure on prices. However, most trades seem more focused on the drop in crude production and optimism for a rebound in demand.

Futures markets for WTI crude oil, gasoline and ultra-low sulfur diesel have all experienced a steady rebound from the spring's lows to the peaks we saw in late June. The rebound appears to be a correction to the big sell-off that was brought on by COVID-19 fears. Crude prices have been stuck in the \$7 range for the last three months, and gasoline and diesel futures have stayed within a 22-cent trading range.

One of the key indicators to watch will be the progress of economic recovery in contrast with rising COVID-19 cases. As the virus spreads and the death toll surpasses 200,000, the possibility of more shutdowns—and another market plunge—is a fear market participants have to consider. But, if the virus can be held in check, and the economy gets back on track, more demand and higher fuel prices look more probable.

Any time we see extremes in the market, it usually sets up a longer-term correction. In this case, we saw crude futures go negative, which drove some shale oil companies out of business, a wave of mergers and acquisitions, and major oil companies write down the value of their crude assets while slashing their budgets for exploration and drilling.

If you were to assume the economy will recover and energy demand will return to pre-pandemic levels within the next year, two years or even decade, it's fair to say that at some point, the market is going to find itself in short supply. Energy markets run



in cycles of booms and busts, and it is just a matter of time until the tide turns again.

My recommendation is to stay committed to your plan and budget fuels cost with fixed-price contracts. Late fall and winter are traditionally the best times of the year to find advantageous pricing for your seasonal or yearly needs. You may have an opportunity to lock in a long-term price that works well for your budget. If you have typically only contracted for your spring fuel needs, this might be a good time to consider booking a full year's worth. We saw strong contracting activity when the virus hit and prices crashed. Many MFA Oil members and customers took full advantage of the pull-back and locked up prices for a full year. Those who did may want to look at adding a few additional months of pricing protection this winter. For everyone else, know your budgeted fuel needs and keep an eye on the markets. If you see an opportunity you like, give your local MFA Oil office a call and we will get you set up with a contract that meets your needs. **M**



» **Tim Danze**  
is the hedging manager for MFA Oil.





## MFA Oil Buys Two New Propane-Powered Trucks with Help from EPA Grant

A pair of propane-powered trucks have been added to the MFA Oil fleet. The company purchased two Freightliner S2G bobtail trucks with fully integrated propane autogas engines in May thanks in part to a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). MFA Oil received \$52,627 in funding through EPA's Diesel Emissions Reduction (DERA) Program.

The grant helped to offset the higher cost of the propane engine, says James Greer, MFA Oil vice president of supply and government affairs.

"We were interested in evaluating the performance of propane-powered engines with our bobtail trucks, and the DERA grant program provided us with an excellent opportunity to test this technology in our fleet," Greer says.

The new trucks will be used to deliver propane to MFA Oil customers in the Kirksville, Mo. and California, Mo. areas. MFA Oil will track each vehicle's mileage and fuel consumption and share that data with the EPA in quarterly reports as part of the DERA program.

## MFA Oil Acquires Propane Supplier Simmons Energy Solutions

MFA Oil continues to grow its base of operations in northwest Arkansas and northeast Oklahoma with the acquisition of Simmons Energy Solutions, the propane business of Simmons Foods Inc. on Sept. 1. The acquisition includes locations in Decatur, Ark., and Jay, Okla.

"The Simmons Energy acquisition fits well with the core geography we serve," said Kenny Steeves, senior vice president of MFA Oil operations. "Our operational footprint overlaps with Simmons Energy and should contribute to the efficiency gains we hope to see through this acquisition. As a farmer-owned cooperative, our focus on customer service will align well with the poultry growers and customers that we will be serving in northern Arkansas and Oklahoma."

"As a food company, we have determined that propane operations are outside of our core business," said David Jackson, chief operating officer of Simmons Foods. "We are confident that we leave our

customers in good hands with MFA Oil, and we will work together to ensure a seamless transition process."

"We believe their business approach and culture is a good fit for our valued customers and team members," Jackson added. "We are pleased that MFA Oil plans to extend job offers to the majority of team members currently working in this operation. Our Human Resources team will be assisting all affected team members with the transition."

MFA Oil will continue to evaluate strategic acquisition opportunities in its existing market areas and other regions where it can expand its footprint.

## Annual Golf Scramble Raises \$175,000 for Operation Homefront

The Sixth Annual MFA Oil Charity Golf Scramble raised \$175,000 for Operation Homefront, a national nonprofit organization that provides emergency and financial assistance to the families of U.S. military service members and veterans. The event was held Sept. 8 at The Club at Old Hawthorne in Columbia, Mo., and featured 43 teams.

"We are proud to continue supporting military families through our partnership with Operation Homefront," says Jon Ihler, MFA Oil President and CEO. "It's an honor to present the organization with our largest one-year donation, which brings our total raised to almost \$850,000 since 2015. We could not have done this without the generosity of our event sponsors, golfers, customers and employees."

The money donated by MFA Oil will go to active duty military and veteran families in Missouri and Kansas, and surrounding areas.

"While all of us are dealing with COVID-19-related challenges, our military families are particularly hard hit and need us now more than ever," says John Pray, Operation Homefront President and CEO. "They turn to us during these trying times and thanks to the continued commitment from generous supporters like MFA Oil, we can and will continue to make a real difference in their lives." M



Pictured from left to right: AJ Kahn, Operation Homefront Area Manager – Region 2; Don North, MFA Oil Director of Product Development and Operation Homefront Advisory Board Member; Jeff Raetz, MFA Oil CFO; and Jon Ihler, MFA Oil President and CEO.





P.O. Box 519  
Columbia, MO 65205

# —NOTICE—

## MFA OIL COMPANY ANNUAL MEETING

**2020 MFA Oil Annual  
Delegate Meeting**

**MONDAY,  
DEC. 14, 2020**

**Local meetings will be  
held within each District.**

**Delegates will receive  
meeting details in  
November.**

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of MFA Oil Company, as represented by delegates elected in accordance with the bylaws, will be held locally within each District on Monday, December 14, 2020 via video format for the purpose of receiving the annual report on company operations and results; distribution of savings; and results for election of directors from District 2 – Northeast, District 4 – Southeast, and District 7 – East Central; and other such business as may be included in the meeting.

Ten percent (10%) of the Members or ten percent (10%) of the Delegates may request that a matter be placed on the agenda at an Annual Meeting provided such request is in writing and delivered to the Board of Directors at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the Annual Meeting.



Tami Ensor,  
Corporate Secretary